Second Class Mail
Printed in Canada
Postage paid at St. Catharines, ON,
and Lewiston, N.Y. — See page 2.

Calvinist Contact

36th YEAR OF PUBLICATION, No. 1800 JULY 10, 1981

Ontario teen helps launch "Dordt Farm"

Ida Kaastra, a junior from Springfield, ON, represented the Dordt College student body during recent ground-breaking ceremonies for the "Dordt farm."

The Agricultural Stewardship Center will include a wide variety of farm facilities when it is completed. The first buildings to be constructed on the property will be those of the dairy.

Present at the ceremony were representatives of the college, administration, board of trustees, faculty and student body, the town of Sioux Center, the Sioux County Dairy and Beef Associations, as well as members of the Agriculture Stewardship Center's board of directors.

The keynote speaker was R.H. Lounsberry, secretary of agriculture for the state of Iowa.

The opening of the centre was a milestone for both Dordt College and agriculturalist students.

Miss Kaastra, who was also winner of the 1981 alumni scholarship, said that the creation of the Dordt farm "illustrates the increasing development of the agriculture program at Dordt and, needless to say, as one of Dordt's agriculture students, I am very excited about the establishment of this new dairy farm."

There is an eagerness to start applying classroom principles to practical farm management, she said. "Inevitably there is quite a difference between sleeping through a Monday morning 8 o'clock class on The Principles of Dairy Management and actually working on the farm, allowing these same principles to be hammered in by practical experiences," Miss Kaastra told the gathering, in her address.

"Is there really a need for a new dairy farm operation?" she asked rhetorically. She listed three reasons for her affirmative answer: "We must be aware of the Christian responsibility to serve God in all areas of life, including agriculture. We must be aware of the responsibility of stewardship in using the resources God has given us. And finally, we must be aware of the responsibility of being a witness to the community by offering and learning a distinct perspective in agriculture. There is a definite need for Christian agricultural education."

Dordt College is the only private college in the state to have such a unique agriculture-business program. The farm will not exist for the sole purpose of providing work-study activities and monies; the primary purpose of the Center is educational in nature.

Students will gain the practical first-hand experience necessary for the complex fields of agriculture and business. In the future, the centre will assist area farmers in broadening their own horizons by encouraging their involvement in programs and seminars related to the centre.

Ida Kaastra

Dordt administrators are hopeful that the centre's dairy facilities will be operational by next Christmas.

INSIDE:

Viewpoint

Who will be a Good Samaritan to the poor nations of the world? The present Canadian government reveals its obvious interest in the North-South conference, but at the same time it appears to be cutting back its funding of specific aid programs. What gives? Read "Canada's role as a Good Samaritan" on page 2.

Education

Students of Abbotsford (BC) Christian High and Quinte Christian High in Belleville recently paid each other exchange visits with the financial assistance of the federal government. See page 8 for the story.

Feature

The Wittes of St. Catharines took in a foster child as a baby. Soon afterward they learned that he was physically handicapped and would need a lot of special attention. They gave it and he gave in return. Page 10 features the first part of Robert's story.

Music

Music styles change with the times and only a few popular groups make a profound enough impact to be remembered for very long. According to music critic Bill Van Dyk, "The Clash" will most likely stand the test of time. On page 12 he explains why.

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The church speaks to government in consistent, organized fashion

What does the Christian Reformed Church have to say to Trudeau, Clark, and other public leaders? Plenty, according to the Committee for Contact with the Government, which held an intensive two-day session recently.

A request for the Canadian government to explain its position on El Salvador was just one of the many actions taken by the committee. The letter also requested the government to help refugees from that country and to use its influence in the international community to work for a just, political settlement of the conflict. "In this action," said chairman Randy Klein, "we join with the Board of World Missions and many other churches to express our concern for our Christian brothers and sisters and other people in that land."

This action was initiated partly in response to a request from Classis Toronto. Committee members were encouraged by the increasing response from churches. Such grassroots concern will keep the committee from becoming a sterile mouthpiece detached from the rest of the body; it is a promising sign for a growing witness in Canadian society.

It is important to support positive actions taken by governments. The committee expressed its support for the basic directions in the report of the Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relations. If implemented, it will improve Canada's policies in trade and aid with poorer countries.

A number of ongoing issues were also discussed. The statements on the Canadian constitution received several responses. The area of the charter of rights will be studied further by John DeVries and Kathy Vandergrift. While the details are left to lawyers and politicians, the committee may address the basic principles in the ongoing debate. With representatives from the West, Mr. Gerry Ensing of Vancouver and to the East, Mr. Dale Poel from Halifax, the discussions reflect the various regions of Canada. But there is a common commitment to justice and love which one can only wish were true of our country as a whole.

Gerald Vandezande and John De Vries continue to follow up recommendations made for improvements in the penal system and prison chaplaincy. As a representative of the CRC, Arie Van Eek's work in refugee policy has become well-known. Suggested revisions to laws regarding pornography are monitored by Christiana Pleizer and Guy Corvers. A statement on capital punishment, similar to the one being discussed by Synod, will be included in a general position statement by the committee.

In many areas the committee's earlier work is opening new doors with new challenges to present a Reformed position on basic issues facing our society.

To provide a solid base for the expanding work, a statement of basic positions, drafted by Randy Klein, was revised and adopted. This will be sent to the Council of Christian Reformed Churches for approval.

Much of the Christian public witness in Canada is done through interchurch groups. After considering the reports from observers who met with these groups for two years, the committee will recommend that the CRC join two of them, Plowshares, dealing with military policy, and the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility. It will also recommend that an observer be appointed to the Interchurch Committee on Human Rights in Latin America.

As well as reviewing past work, delegates to the fall meeting of Council will be asked to suggest issues for future work by the committee in its ongoing task to prophetically address basic issues in our society.

VIEWPOINT

by Keith Knight

Canada's role as a Good Samaritan

June 15 and 16 were historic days in the House of Commons. It was the occasion of a two-day debate on foreign affairs policy. The fact that it took place at all was as much a result of circumstance as design.

When it became clear that the resolution on the constitution would not make it to the House from the Supreme Court before July 1, the government suddenly had some time on its hands.

It had been pressed to have a foreign policy debate, especially in view of the Report of the Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relation. So, the government offered a day for debate and the New Democrats offered one of its Opposition days — each for very different motives.

The government used the opportunity for a quick release of its official response to the parliamentary task force report. Doug Roche, vice-chairman of the Task Force, had to sit out part of the debate in order to study and respond to it. The occasion was primarily a platform for Mr. Trudeau to wax eloquent about his views on North-South relations just before leaving to visit several of the leaders who plan to attend the Economic Summit in Ottawa, July 22 and 23.

And it was a powerful speech. At the outset, Mr. Trudeau said: "The starving refugee lying in the hot dust of the Sahel can scarcely summon the strength to help himself, let alone strike out at us. If his children survive they will remember us, and with fury in their hearts, you can be sure. But that is a threat for another time."

Throughout the speech, Mr. Trudeau assumed that the reason for anger of the dying refugee's children is because of our lack of response in the *next* ten years. The basis of the fury will be our lack of acting in the future. He ignores what Canada and other Western and Eastern bloc nations have and have not done in the past.

The economic summit which Mr. Trudeau has suggested "will perhaps be the most important summit in terms of where the world should be going in years." Mr. Trudeau is putting a lot on the line when he brings the seven leaders into seclusion near Ottawa to get down to basic subjects: "How do you see the evolution of East-West relations and what are your unstated major premises when you are dealing with the South? You know, is it charity? Is it self-help? Is it inevitable? (at a press conference June 12).

◄ NO SOLUTIONS

He does not promise to come up with "solutions" on the North-South issue but a discussion of basic assumptions is certainly a welcome idea. He has been receiving resistance about even having the North-South topic on the agenda with nations most concerned with problems in their own economics.

This is not a new topic for Mr. Trudeau. He has spoken eloquently on this several times. One editorial reminded us of his comments of ten years ago: "The Government intends to reorganize our resources and our energies to play a role in the world as it is not to dream of things as they were."

During those ten years, our development assistance had dropped from .54 per cent to .43 per cent this year. In spite of the influx of refugees, the Department of Immigration has reduced the quota of refugees from 40,173 in 1980 to 21,000 in 1981. At about the same time as Mr. Trudeau was making his remarks, Mr. Axworthy announced that the funding for programs for resettlement of Indo-Chinese refugees was being cut. Canada has sharply increased her production and exports of parts for armaments produced in the U.S. and often sent to Third World countries as aid.

Mr. Trudeau is right. Basic motives play a large part in our response to the North-South issue. That is certainly the case with Canada. In his words, "But even if we are not moved by justice, common sense and self-interest should tell us that if we want growing markets for our products, an orderly global economy and peace in the world, we should support reform."

". . . For Canadians, the state of the world is of deep importance and not least because a healthy international environment is vital to Canadian economic growth."

That gap between self-interest and justice goes a long way toward explaining why Canada's actions have been so weak in the last ten years.

◄ THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

The government's official response to the Report of the Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relations does not at all reflect a rousing appeal to justice. Mr. Trudeau suggested that improving conditions of those suffering from starvation and war "can be done but it will require a gigantic effort." This response to the Task Force Report — already a result of compromise in order to get all-party support — is no such effort.

The response takes credit for several things as already being government policy and often attempts to paper over differences. For example, the Task Force suggested 1 per cent of development assistance be used to educate Canadians on North-South. The response: "The Government intends to give increased priority to the promotion, especially by non-governmental organizations, of public awareness. It will continue to examine other methods, and their appropriate level of funding that should be established for such activities."

In simple terms, "No." Only on the idea of an energy affiliate to the World Bank was the government's response solidly in support. Though favourable to the thrust of the report its response is lukewarm to what is already a compromise report.

In the closing of his speech during the debate, Mr. Doug Roche rightly pointed out, "I am sorry that the government did not give a commitment to a new five-year strategy for international development." At least then Parliament and the Canadian people would have some clear notion of where we were heading. It would give us some picture of the goals Canada is setting. It would provide some idea of the motives of our policies.

◄ WHAT MAKES US TICK?

It is these motives Mr. Bob Ogle referred to in what was the most powerful speech of the debate. Referring to Mr. Trudeau's use of the phrase "good neighbour" he proceeded to read the entire story of the Good Samaritan from the Bible.

He then went on to say: "It is a simple story but a profound principle. There are basically three kinds of people in the story. The first are the thieves. They are the ones who came along, took, robbed, beat, stripped and left the person in the ditch. The second group was the priest and the Levite. They are the ones who saw the problem but they were unwilling to get their hands dirty; they would not look after the person in the ditch. Finally, the Samaritan, the one who came last, stopped, took the risk and gave up everything. He took all the chances; he was willing to give what he had. He took the man and looked after him; he was the neighbour.

"In the North-South, we are dealing with neighbours. In those three different groups of people who approached the man in the ditch, I believe we have the principles by which our world still works. The first group came and said, "What is mine is mine," and they did not care about anybody else. The third group came by and said — and I am calling upon the House of Commons and the people of Canada to put us into the third group — "What is yours and what is mine is ours." It is an old story, but I believe the elements which make up the story are being lived out in the world today. I believe that story has a lot to do with what must happen in the Third World, the South and the North and the way we all relate to it.

"Sometimes when we talk about the North-South, we sort of feel that we have it all and the South has nothing. Because I have had the privilege to live in the South as well as in the North, I know it is a completely false idea. The South has great values to show the North. With its richness and multitude of cultures all over the world, the South has many things to show us. I believe it is necessary in the North-South dialogue to listen extremely carefully to what the South has to say about many things — about ways of life, about values and many other things.

Church urged to penetrate secularized society

"A church without evangelism invites extinction," a prominent evangelical theologian warned audiences during a cross-Canada tour in late May. Dr. Carl F.H. Henry, a lecturer-at-large with World Vision, addressed about 800 ministers in seven major centres at Christian leadership seminars sponsored by Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

A failure to evangelize, added the 68-year-old Christian leader, "raises doubts about a church's spiritual vitality."

The founding editor of *Christianity Today* warned, however, that Christian responsibility in the world should not be narrowly defined to include only evangelism. "The church's mission too often has been limited to preoccupation with personal evangelism at the expense of public concerns," he told Canadian leaders.

Henry contended that the proper conception of the church was that of "an army of occupation that challenges the power of Satan, who is a squatter." He reminded his hearers that Jesus spoke of "the illuminating and preserving role of Christians as light and salt in a darkening and decaying society."

The full-orbed Christian mission in a secularized society was not an easy one, Henry maintained. "The grey mist of secularism stupefies the sense of holiness, stifles moral outrage, intimidates ethical indignation, and questions the worth of purity," he said. "Godliness is dismissed as a virtue, and evil seems respectable."

That secular tyranny can be successfully challenged only by the gospel, Henry added. "Modern learning is powerless to challenge this beguiling mood," he went on, "because its humanistic and naturalistic temper make it part of the problem."

Vital Christian proclamation and involvement in public life, he cautioned, were made more difficult by "the current entrenchment of moral pluralism as a social norm."

"North American society is being conditioned by the dogma that democracy requires ethical diversity and that the biblical morality must therefore be transcended," Henry pointed out. "The next step will be to insist that all moral distinctions are relative," he predicted.

The challenge facing Christians and the church in that situation is an awesome one, the articulate theologian told the seminars, and the stakes are high. "Unless we challenge the prejudices of moral theorists for whom the cultural consensus alone dictates public policy, we shall soon preside over the collapse of democracy into chaos," he grimly warned.

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Advertising
Display advertising deadline is Thursday 10 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Friday 10 a.m. for the next week's issue. See classified page for rates.

Subscriptions
$17.50 for one year and $32.00 for two years. Overseas by Airmail $55.00. Surface mail $25.00.
Calvinist Contact is published by Knight Publishing Ltd., 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON

Canada Mail: Second Class Mail Registration No. 0-0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3.

U.S. Mail: Calvinist Contact (USPS 518-090), published weekly except for the 8th and 29th of August and the last issue of December, by K. Knight Publishing Limited, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, N.Y. 14092. Postmaster: send address changes to Calvinist Contact, P.O. Box 110, Lewiston, N.Y. 14092

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LETTERS

CJL: A "frank and open-hearted discussion"

Dear Sir:
In recent issues of *Calvinist Contact* (April 3, May 8) Mr. John Hultink of St. Catharines, ON, has taken a critical look at the central thrust of CJL's policies and actions. Criticism, especially incisive and positive criticism, is not only desirable, it is necessary and invaluable because it helps us clarify our own notions and feelings.

Mr. Hultink's correspondence had that effect on me, even though I found his arguments surprisingly ambiguous and fuzzy. I say surprisingly, because it is Mr. Hultink who decries the "frustratingly ambiguous" nature of CJL's writing. I am familiar with some of that writing, especially the material produced in the last few years, and can only say that I am generally impressed with the clarity of CJL's vision and with the committee's unequivocal adherence to scriptural injunctions. By comparison, I found Mr. Hultink's letters confused and confusing.

The message I got out of those letters was that because of the continued prowling presence of Satan, peace on earth is a pipe dream which ought not to be pursued by Christians as a realistic objective. It has always been my understanding, however, that the peace of God was that which passes understanding and which, through our Lord Jesus, was offered freely to sinful man. That peace, I thought, was primarily a matter of the heart, a liberating awareness of the pardoning of our sins. It was my belief that out of that peace, we Christians spontaneously can, want to, and even have to radiate a comforting warmth into a devilishly cold world. Yet, I get the worrisome impression that Mr. Hultink wants us to keep everything brightly lit under our own bushels, the salt dormant in our shakers.

I really can't believe Mr. Hultink means that. I suspect that he, too, wants us to be a leavening influence in the world. Yet in our society we discover that often the priest and the Levite still smugly walk past the robber's victim on the dusty road while the Samaritan shows compassion. And that Samaritan doesn't ask "Hey, guy, are you saved?" Neither does he say, "Come on, kid, get in my car. We'll get you cleaned up, make you look respectable again and then I'll take you to church." Nothing like that. The social service and human rights agencies extend aid where they see a need while the Christian community still often only argues about the nature and implications of its calling.

As I understand it, CJL champions justice wherever it discovers an injustice and takes concrete action whenever its sadly limited resources allow for action. It does so because its personnel, rooted in Christ, has grown into a comforting glade of compassion for the oppressed, especially for the victims of robbery and exploitation. To suggest that there is "considerable truth" to the allegation that CJL is leftist, as Mr. Hultink does, is most unfortunate. By that logic Christ becomes an out-and-out socialist when he tells the rich young ruler to sell all he has and give it to the poor.

No, CJL is neither leftist nor socialist as I understand those terms. CJL's appreciation for the freely offered peace of God has moved it into the pursuit of some practical applications of that peace. CJL offers tangible means towards succor: valuable legal advice, efficient service, sometimes even effective intervention on behalf of oppressed people, victims of a cold and materialistic system and society. Of course its actions will not bring about complete peace on earth any more than evangelism will make all people believers. Yet evangelism is a natural consequence of our salvation in Christ and could not be stopped even if we wanted it to. The *Lord* builds His Church. Should we fail to witness, the very stones would proclaim His Lordship. In the same manner, it seems to me, the Christian community is obligated and naturally inclined to pursue peaceful — that is, just — relations between all people. Peace without justice is an impossibility, unless one perceives of peace only in terms of the absence of open violence, a limited notion indeed. By seeking justice, therefore, CJL is actively promoting peace on earth.

Mr. Hultink's correspondence has crystallized for me not only the validity and importance of CJL's efforts, it has also made it more clear to me that Christians generally should more actively support the Committee's endeavours. Surely the CRC has not suffered any "benign neglect" from its members. Its denominational work is well established and as a rule is admirably supported. That work is in no way impeded by CJL's initiatives. Rather, the committee has taken the lead in showing us a broadened scope for the leavening impact of Christianity on a deeply troubled world. To Christians imbued with the value system of our consumer oriented society, that scope will often lead right into our own backyards and bank accounts. That will be painful, especially if we no longer see our possessions as belonging to Christ in the first place anyway.

Mr. Hultink is right on when he mentions that the Apostles "died the death of martyrdom for their Lord." They died for their Lord, not for their church. They died preaching the Gospel of salvation, of peace and justice. They refused to give in to man-centred and unjust regimes and societies. They died rather than betray the full Gospel. We should not refer to their sacrifices lightly. They were "heroes of faith" made strong by Christ. They took incisive action, for to them faith without action was an absurdity. I don't know if they actually expected peace on earth to be established in their time. I wouldn't be surprised if they did. What *is* clear is that they did not sit back to wait for it to happen. They acted, they witnessed, and paid for it dearly.

The Apostles were probably criticized as well. Anyone who opens his mouth or acts in public will, and probably should, be criticized. Often, however, public criticism is voiced for the wrong reasons and out of questionable motives. Such criticism is designed not to counsel or correct, but to break down and inflict pain. Considerable amounts of public criticism directed at CJL and its public affairs director, Mr. Gerald Vandezande, have been of the latter variety, hostile and even brutal. Sadly, most of that sort of opposition has come from within my own CRC.

It is my growing conviction that Mr. Vandezande has been privileged, and burdened, with a special calling for which the Lord has equipped him with extraordinary talents, not the least of which is a penetrating vision that gives him an acute perception of the Christian's social obligation today. He is but a man and thus fallible and prone to all human frailties. When pricked, he will bleed, and when his health fails he needs to be hospitalized, as recently was the case. However, when on the basis of scripture he criticizes the CRC and its members, as Mr. Hultink mentioned, we ought to examine the validity of the criticism, its applicability and motive, rather than strike back for personal or other narrow reasons. I, for one, am grateful for the manner in which the Lord has seen fit to use Mr. Vandezande. I have usually found the latter's comments refreshing, penetrating, honest, and motivated by a desire to obey the full gospel.

Mr. Vandezande invited *Calvinist Contact* readers to "engage in a frank and open-hearted discussion about the work of CJL." Ideally, such a discussion should seek to identify weaknesses, propose improvements and offer encouragement. In my opinion, the main and most debilitating weakness in CJL's work is not in its programs and ambitions but in the forced limitation of its scope. Insufficient funds rather than a shortage of opportunities or a blurred vision severely restricts CJL's biblically inspired interventions. That lack of money might well become less of a problem if more of our people would overcome the residual antagonisms Mr. Hultink refers to (April 3), and instead assist the Committee financially.

Anyone who has ever visited the ridiculously cramped quarters of CJL in Toronto and who knows how precious few people are actually full-time employees, will recognize that both the quality and volume of the work done are minor miracles. Support and encouragement are essential if this work is to expand. That it *must* expand, despite Mr. Hultink's misgivings and despite the continued "alienation" of others, I am firmly convinced of. The Lord has seen fit to place us in a society whose social awareness is sharper and more alive than that of any other society before ours.

Regrettably, Christian people have not generally been in the forefront of the consciousness-raising process. No doubt the general grace of God has been instrumental in preparing hearts for compassion and concern while priests and Levites looked the other way. Gerald Vandezande and CJL should be, nay, must be enabled to let the light of Christ shine in the vanguard of the struggle for social justice. I would even go so far in this "frank and open-hearted discussion" as to propose that the CRC as an institution take a much more active interest in the work of CJL than it has shown to date.

CJL has made important and worthwhile things happen in our society in the Lord's name and is continuing to do so. It is truly a catalyst on behalf of the Prince of Peace. Harmony in all of creation, the shalom of God, is its objective, an ideal all Christians can adopt and share without having to abandon a healthy awareness of the continued reality of Satan's destructive influence. But our side has won, our Champion rules, and His victory has enabled us to obtain a vision of peace and justice far more complete than even the most well-intentioned humanist could ever dream of.

To Mr. Hultink's remarks about the devil I say: "Satan be damned. To hell with him. We stand secure in the promises of our God, in the sacrifice of His Son, and in the sustaining real presence of His Spirit. What, then, are we quibbling about? The Conqueror leads and we must follow in the different offices to which He has called us, the CJL'ers in theirs, Mr. Hultink in his and I in mine. I am firmly persuaded that if we so obey the Master, He will take care of peace on earth."

Randy Klein,
Pierrefonds, PQ

Freedom from oppression deserves support

Dear Sir:
I would like to respond to Mr. Van Veen's letter of June 12 in which he makes a number of unfortunate misrepresentations of my article on El Salvador (C.C. May 15, 1981).

Among other things, Mr. Van Veen suggests I support the rebels and close my eyes to Communist takeovers. The whole point of the article, and of previous ones about Poland, was that we ought to support the Solidarity movement in Poland against the Soviet styled leadership of that country.

Many feel we ought to support such reform in Poland even though many of the people are Communist. My question was, if that is so, should we not consider supporting a resistance movement in El Salvador, where most of the people are not Communist?

This is not "one-sided protest." I was, in fact, trying to probe the notion very common among us, that we ought to oppose only Communist regimes.

Mr. Van Veen asks where the guerrillas get their arms? The *Globe and Mail* of February 28, reported that most of them either have been captured from government forces, or purchased on the open or black markets, especially in Miami, Florida.

Mexico, Ecuador and Panama offer support. Venezuela and Brazil, known for their right wing repression, are reversing their earlier position of support for the government.

Robert E. White, the former ambassador to El Salvador has said that, "To the extent that you emphasize a military solution in El Salvador, you are going to be buttressing one of the most out-of-control, violent, blood thirsty groups of men in the world. They have killed at a minimum, 5,000 to 6,000 kids on the mere suspicion that they were involved with leftists" (*The New York Times*, March 8).

I see the FDR (the "rebels") as a group similar to the coalition resistance movement during the Second World War. It is a coalition formed to oppose a common foe.

Hopefully that opposition will work. The tough part will be negotiating a settlement and rebuilding the country. No one knows what that will bring. As I suggested in the earlier article Mr. Van Veen referred to, "I'm not so sure that I would like the solution, either of them (the Solidarity movement in Poland or the resistance movement in El Salvador) would propose, but for now I must support their struggle for freedom from oppression. The people in El Salvador are not as likely to choose Communism as the people in Poland who are Communists" (May 15, 1981).

I hope this clears up some of the misrepresentations.

Ben Vandezande,
St. Catharines, ON

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NEWS by Ben Vandezande

Newslight

The Russians may not be wise in the ways of the Lord, but they are very clever. They recognize the positive role Christians play in society and consider Christians to be among their best citizens. Christians are often the mainstay of society.

Strangely enough in North America the story is often the opposite. Here many institutions want to keep the Christian faith out. It seems we aren't as clever as the Russians.

The Christian church in North America has been justifiably criticized for its lack of public involvement and influence in society.

It is time, however, that we, in the Reformed tradition, recognize the positive role that many Christians play in all areas of life. Certainly, many of the organizations in which Christians work are not Christian. Yet, these people provide much healing and positive influence.

I think of social workers in various agencies. These people supply the last human line of hope for others whose lives are coming apart. Working for government agencies means they must help; they must not be selective.

We must recognize that the work of many people is essential to the survival of society as we know it today: those in hospitals providing care, on farms practising stewardship, in factories doing craftsmanship, in offices demonstrating honesty, and in the legal profession being fair. The list could go on.

But do we really recognize these Christian workers? Do we actively support them in their struggles? Do we pray for them as we do for Christian schools and other Christian organizations?

Reformed people are joining the millions of other Christians struggling to live out their faith, and to be of public service in organizations that are not Christian. Can we rally around them with the same enthusiasm we show towards our Christian school teachers? We are often caught up in the internal struggles Christian schools, churches and other organizations produce. We seem to have little time for the daily struggles of those in non-Christian institutions.

Perhaps we can learn a lesson from the Russians and recognize the importance of Christians in the public institutions of society. The Russians do so because they find Christians to be a reliable glue to hold together institutions that are coming apart. We, Christians, may recognize them as the leaven in the loaf. That is not being clever. That's being wise to the ways of God in this day of grace.

Ben Vandezande

Abortion amendment needed

Several things can be learned from the mystery surrounding the outcome of the Supreme Court decision on the Constitution. For one, it should be clear that no one can predict the outcome of a Supreme Court decision.

That should teach us something about the possible effects of having human rights issues such as abortion decided by the courts.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote Mr. Trudeau to ask for an amendment to the Charter "which would guarantee that the Charter would not prejudicially affect the rights of the unborn."

Mr. Trudeau has refused. He suggested that the Constitution ought not to decide the abortion issue one way or the other. He went on to share an interpretation of lawyers in the Justice Department that sections 7 and 15 in the proposed Charter were not open to the interpretation of the right to choice on abortion.

Archbishop MacNeil, speaking on behalf of the Catholic conference, rightly argued that if the government saw fit to introduce amendments regarding native people and separate school supporters in order to avoid ambiguity, why not do the same with abortion?

He also found legal opinion that suggests the proposed Charter was prejudiced in favour of abortion. The point is, neither Rev. MacNeil's lawyers nor the lawyers in the Justice Department are the justices of the Supreme Court. Their opinion, however valuable, is useless when it comes to making the final decision in the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court will soon decide on the legality of the resolution concerning the constitution before the House. What will they decide? We can only wait and see.

But, we may not leave the lives of many of our unborn children in such mysterious hands. That must be decided in Parliament. Mr. Trudeau should include Rev. MacNeil's amendment before he dashes off to England to get approval.

Justice Department defends Charter of Rights

It has been suggested that the wording in Section 15 of the constitutional resolution was changed "to prevent fetuses from having protection from the "Charter." This is completely inaccurate.

Section 15 deals with equality rights and states that:

(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups, including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Clearly non-discrimination on grounds such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex or age has no relation to fetuses. The reason the word "individual" is used is to ensure that Section 15 does not apply to corporations. When the use of the word "individual" was suggested for Section 15, the question of abortion was never raised, as it is not relevant to issues of non-discrimination.

It is argued that pro-abortionists will be able to use Section 15 to increase the number of abortion facilities. This argument is based on the premise that the existence of abortion clinics will be constitutionally guaranteed. Their existence is dependent not on the Constitution but on the Criminal Code. If the Criminal Code is ever changed so as to prohibit abortion, no one could ever make the argument that the "equal protection clause" would apply so as to require the creation of abortion clinics, nor could anyone suggest that the "equal protection clause" could overturn any change in the Criminal Code. In other words, as long as the Constitution Act remains neutral, the issue of abortion remains one related to the Criminal Code. In any case, the "equal protection clause" does not mean that everyone must be treated with exact equality. This has been made clear in recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court, holding that a denial of public health funds for abortions, while granting them for childbirths, did not create improper inequality.

As the U.S. Supreme Court stated, the right to obtain an abortion does not imply any limitation on a State's authority to make a value judgment favouring childbirth over abortion in the allocation of public funds.

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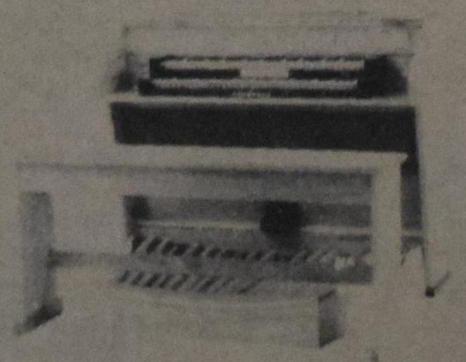
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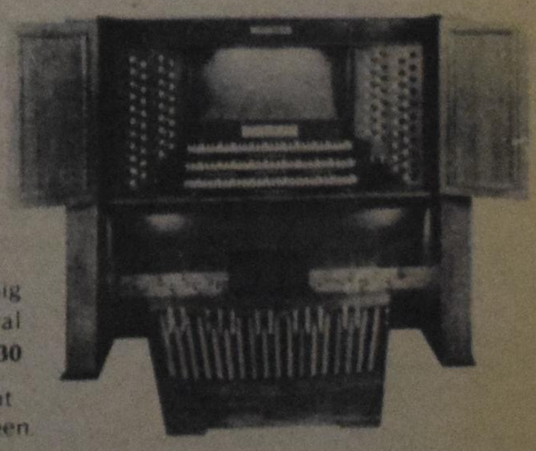
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LETTERS

They experienced faith-healing in the Philippines

Dear Sir:
Re: Westerners seek faith healing in the Philippines, Feb. 13.

Antonio (Dr. Tony) Agpaoa was mentioned in the article. He is not a "faith healer" in the usual sense, since he, as well as the other healers actually do work ("operate") on the sick person. He constantly reminds each patient that it is God who heals them, and he will not take any credit or thanks for his work.

We are told that we have to beware of Satan, masquerading as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). On the other side of the coin, we have Luke 9:49, 50, where Jesus' disciples forbade a man from casting out demons because he didn't follow them. Jesus told them not to do this because "he that is not against us is for us."

I feel that a very negative attitude has been taken by stating that "we live in a day when people still sacrifice everything to have their existence here on earth continued. This is the triumph of secularism." This may be true in some people or maybe even the majority, but this is no reason to condemn the whole concept.

It costs between two and three thousand dollars to get to the Philippines. There is no charge for the healing. A maximum of $100 may be made as a donation, but it is not mandatory.

Antonio Agpaoa does not run a multi-million peso healing centre. The whole centre is barely what we consider adequate as far as running water, electricity, accommodations and food are concerned. His home and transportation may be better than the average Filipino, but he certainly is not using his powers for personal accumulation of wealth. I would like to point out that his money was made before 1972, the year the clinic was started.

Furthermore, it is not a healing centre exclusively for rich, westerners and Filipinos. One day a month he goes to the lowlands, to the poor people who can't come to the centre.

Not everyone is healed, neither the people in the lowlands nor the people that come to the centre. The faith that God can heal you, if it is His will, is all that is required.

I would like to know why it is that we readily accept all miracles that were performed in the Bible but that we are too skeptical, if not to totally adverse to any possibility of God giving certain people the power to perform miracles. Many people completely rule out the possibility of such healing completely. Even Christians will go to a secular doctor who completely denies the presence of God.

The most convincing statement that can be made for these healers is in the results. The physical healing may indeed be spectacular, but the real results are spiritual. My wife, as well as others that have come back from the Philippines, have come back praising God. It has brought all of them and their family members much closer to God.

At no time do these healers try to convert the people that come to them to any of the false notions or ideas that may be present in the Philippines. They use the same Bible we use and believe in the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Although their beliefs may not be exactly the same as ours, the differences are not important enough to dwell on.

I have heard the Rev. Sonny's tape of the Lord's prayer. It was explained to me with more clarity than ever before.

The people who have discussed the subject with us, know how much we just bubble over with excitement. We praise God for the healing and also for bringing us closer to Him and to each other.

Norman Eygenraam, Troy, ON

Ingrid, you *are* a prophetess

Dear Sir:
Yes, 16-years-old and a prophetess! No, not an ordained one in the regular sense of the word, but because you are a Christian you are a partaker of Christ's anointing to Prophet, Priest and King, (see Lord's Day XII).

That is an everyday calling. Shall I give you a list where I've been a prophetess (at least I tried)?

When I sought the will of God for my own life; when I brought up my children in the fear of the Lord; when I discussed problems with my husband, how to solve them according to God's directions. And of course, when I taught Sunday school and instructed catechisms. And the job is still going on. With my friends I might discuss what our Christian position is in the labour movement or politics. In charge of a chapel service and studying the Bible with my students gives me ample opportunity to be a prophetess. Writing articles and books is another avenue. The list is almost endless.

Why knock at a door which is securely closed as far as I can see? Why not go through the door that is wide open if you want to do more than the everyday calling of a Christian? Attend the Reformed Bible College with lots of opportunities for the future or take teachers' training, majoring in Bible Study.

The "pulpit" is as big as you make it. Don't just look at that narrow one.

Nell Van Ry,
Edmonton, AB

Eastern Canada: only hearers of the Word?

Dear Sir:
Mr. Wiekamp's response to Klaas Terpstra's letter is absolutely right. The grassroots members (whatever that means) of Eastern Canada do not know what the Council of the Christian Reformed Church does, nor are they interested.

The sad part is that this applies to many more things. For instance:

Higher education: As far as we know, there is no Christian high school in Classis Eastern Canada of Reformed persuasion.

Redeemer College: There is no enthusiasm about this. They do not even talk about these things here.

Salem: No, too far away.

CLAC: It does a marvelous job as a Christian witness in the field of labour in our country, but there is no local in the whole Classis Eastern Canada.

As far as work of mercy goes, our deacons received only 40 per cent of what they asked for Bangladesh.

Mr. Wiekamp does not have to worry about killing personal initiative by Council for there is not much left to kill. It seems to be too much a matter of dollars and cents, but I question if that is responsible Christian stewardship.

Who was it who wrote: "The church will perish for lack of vision?" Maybe here in Eastern Canada some more window cleaning should be done so that our vision of God's kingdom becomes much clearer and we will not become only hearers but also doers of the Word.

Harry Mulder Sr.,
Brockville, ON

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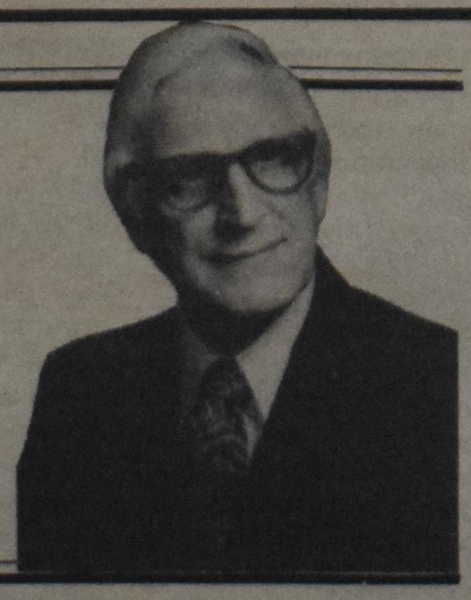

Evangelism Today

by Wesley Smedes

Is yours a friendly church?

"The first essential for the evangelistic task of the congregation is to promote an atmosphere of welcome and friendliness within the church." This is a quote from one of the Canadian Churches reporting in *Calvinist Contact*.

Right on!

Surveys do show that people will come to a church that is friendly and warm and caring. On the other hand, the same surveys indicate that people will not return to a church or will leave a church where genuine friendliness is absent.

A church can do a lot of promotion and have any number of programs to bring people to church. But unless a church is friendly and warm, people may come once, but they'll not come back.

Is your church a warm and friendly church, creating the atmosphere that you *do* care about people who come to your services? I suppose that most of us think our church is a friendly place. However, if your church has not had many non-CRC visitors, it could be that your church is friendly to those who belong, but it may be giving the cold shoulder to strangers without being aware of what is happening.

A friendly atmosphere does not come automatically. This is something at which a church must work hard. Apparently, some churches are not working at being a friendly church; one complaint I hear frequently is that persons who attend a CR church while out of town discover that nobody says "hello" to them.

If you want to develop a church that reaches out to others, your worship services must be joyous and celebrative; the language must be understandable to the man on the street; unwritten signs which convey that you don't really care whether visitors are present must be eliminated; and your church programs must relate to people's needs.

These things make an impression on visitors, showing that you care about their being there.

Important also for creating a friendly and warm church is the work of the ushers and greeters. These are KEY people. They can make a big difference in the visitor wanting to come back the next Sunday. The greeters are very often the point of first real contact with the church family. Such first impressions, as you know, make a big difference.

I'd like to give some suggestions for your Greeter/Usher Program:

1. Be selective. Recruit persons who have the gift of being effective greeters, communicating the spirit of friendliness. Not everyone is good at this. Remember that being elected an elder or deacon does not automatically qualify a person for the important work of greeting and ushering. It would be well, also, to select some of our gifted women. Many of them are very good greeters and ushers.

2. Select a sufficient number. In our East Lansing CRC, at least fifty persons are appointed as greeters and ushers, both men and women. While not all fifty are on duty each Sunday, those not on duty are sitting in various parts of the church, alert for visitors. In that church it's hard for a visitor to leave a Sunday morning service without more than one person extending a warm welcome before and after the service. Select a sufficient number of helpers so that serving as a greeter or usher does not become too big a task for anyone, and yet you have enough helpers to get the job done.

3. Have a definite schedule for those who serve. It is important for the greeters and ushers to know which Sundays they must serve and how many Sundays they must serve. Incidentally, having new greeters every Sunday does not get the job done well. I would like to suggest that serving for a month at a time is good. This provides adequate time for the greeters and ushers to know their jobs well and do their work effectively.

4. Have a written job description. Greeters and ushers can be more comfortable in their assignment if you have a job description for them. Again, I would refer to the East Lansing church. They have a job description written down for those who serve. If you'll drop a note at Home Missions, we will be glad to send you a copy of their Greeter and Usher Job Description.

5. Provide training for the greeters and ushers. This is important! A training session once or twice a year will do wonders for your greeting personnel. In that training session you can provide some do's and don'ts on greeting people, acquaint greeters with the location of the nursery, the rest rooms, the class rooms, the consistory rooms and so forth. You can give suggestions on how to get people to sign the Guest Register. You can stress the importance of introducing visitors to others. Perhaps greeters could be given small maps of your church building with rooms marked, which they, in turn, can give to visitors. These are just some of the things you can do in training sessions. Having some training sessions will impress upon the greeters and ushers that you take them with seriousness.

The most wonderful job on earth

by Leonard Schalkwyk

Rev. Schalkwyk is pastor in Collingwood, ON.

Recently, Classis Huron met. It was a great meeting, under the able and witty leadership of Rev. A. Vandenberg. We had good fellowship, discussed and laughed in the love of the Lord, just like a classis meeting should be.

However, there was one sad note: the Student Fund Committee reported having bulging coffers, but having no person to support with its treasures. The only one who had planned to be a preacher, had withdrawn. Therefore, classis decided that no quota was needed for this cause. However, classis also decided "to take strong recruiting action for the ordained ministry in view of the long range needs of the church for leadership."

Also in other classes there are fewer individuals desiring the ministry of the gospel. It is a strange thing that so few like to study for 'the most wonderful job on earth.' For that is what the ministry is. Even though all work is kingdom work, yet our staunch reformed forefathers called it „Het wondere ambt."

In hyper-Calvinism we can stress so much that 'all jobs are God's jobs,' that we lose sight of the fact that the greatest institution on earth is the church and that the greatest task is to preach the gospel.

Rev. Peter Borgdorff opened the recent minister's conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan with these words: "You are in the most important work on the face of the earth."

Therefore, fathers and mothers, let us revive this Reformed conviction that it is a great privilege to be a minister of the gospel. Young people, would you like to be in "the most rewarding job on earth?" Actually, it is not a job. If you do it as a job, you will be disappointed. You will not earn much money by it, and instead of promotion, the Lord may call you to a church where you earn even less than in the previous one. Moreover, the ministry is known as a "strain-related occupation."

A minister should not look for appreciation either. The sermon is too long or too short, he has too much hair or too little, he does not visit enough or too much, he is too popular with the young people or not popular enough, he pays too much attention to the old folks or neglects them. He is too fat or too skinny. These are all criticisms which a minister should allow a congregation to enjoy. His people love it and they need it. The pastor should have the hide of an elephant and the patience of a lamb.

Yet it is "the greatest job on earth," for it is never senseless and it offers the greatest fulfillment. A faithful servant of the Lord will also experience the sincere love of God's people. A minister has to live for others and that is the best life you can have. Forgetting about yourself, being concerned about the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of other people is a great way to live.

Therefore, this is a call to young people to pray about whether God calls them to the preaching of the gospel. Classes will be happy to help you financially to reach that goal.

However, a word of caution is in place. Look at the talents which the Lord has given you. A young, successful farmer came to his minister and said: While I was ploughing the field, I saw a sign in the sky which read: "P.C." So here I am, because that means: "Preach Christ." The pastor prayerfully looked at the young man and felt led to say: "Son, it may also mean: 'Plant corn.' If the Lord has given you a talent in Math, Engineering or technical abilities, it may be that he calls you to another field in His kingdom."

But if you love to be with people, love languages and can write a ten-page essay about one picture shown to you, then maybe God has given you talents to become a minister. And remember: It is the most wonderful job on earth!

PASTORAL COUNSELING

Learning from our failures

By Rev. Ralph Heynen

For all of us there are moments of success as well as moments of failure. Failure helps us to be humble, while success keeps us from becoming discouraged. To live healthy lives we must learn to live in the light of our best accomplishments rather than in the shadow of our defeats.

Have you ever watched a little child learning to walk? He takes a few faltering steps and falls. Some children begin to wail and look around for help, but a child who really wants to learn to walk will pick himself up and take another step. Before long he's walking! When he has accomplished this he will smile at his mother and dad because he feels he has really done something! A successful step is an encouragement and it helps him to build self-confidence.

We, too, must learn to accentuate our successes rather than our failures. There are many people who accentuate failures. We all have our failures. But it makes a lot of difference how we look at them. If we think only of our failures, we get the idea that we *are* failures! There is a world of difference between having a failure and being a failure. Just because we have failed once or twice — or maybe even ten times — it doesn't mean that we are failures in life. We all have our share of failures, but if we use them properly they can help us to become stronger personalities.

If a young bride is completely frustrated because of her early failures in cooking for her husband, she's never going to be a good homemaker. If all fishermen gave up fishing when they didn't have good catches, the sport would soon become extinct. I know that ministers sometimes conduct services that do not go as well as they hoped. Not every sermon is a masterpiece! The audience may be restless and the results are not encouraging. For some ministers this leads to "blue Monday," and that's a typical expression among ministers. Well, that's not so bad — it may teach him to work a little harder for next week. But "blue Monday" should not lead to "blue Tuesday" and "blue Wednesday." That is over-doing a failure."

This happens in families, too. There may be several children who do very well. They are promising; they are a credit to the family name. But also within that family may be one or two children who are not following the spiritual traditions of the family. Some parents will sit and mope about that fact, to the neglect of the other ones who are doing so well. We should not concentrate too much on our liabilities, on the things that we have not been able to accomplish. In this way we could lose the real perspective of living. It's dangerous to develop the feeling that we must always succeed. This ideal stems from pride, but, after all, we are human. Other people have failures, shouldn't we expect to have some failures in life, too?

Scientists, in their experiments, seldom gain success in their early attempts. Thomas Edison made more than 400 models of the incandescent lamp that failed before he successfully developed one that worked. Madame Curie worked under very trying circumstances with many failures before she discovered radium and its usefulness. All scientific developments have come through learning from failures.

Failures teach us many lessons. The ten spies who spied out the land of Canaan made an interesting observation when they reported back to the people. They said: "We are as grasshoppers in their sight! They seemed to themselves to be like grasshoppers when they stood along side of these tall people in the land of Canaan. They saw the fortified cities that they were supposed to conquer and felt helpless. They took a 'grasshopper view' of life! I prefer the attitude of Joshua and Caleb when they said: Sure, it's a big land, it's a rich land, it's a wonderful land. And with God's help we can take it!

When we feel that we have had failures in our lives it's good for us not to become paralyzed. We should not look at it and say: "It's such a mess it can't be solved anyway! It's hopeless!" No, failure keeps us humble, but it also serves to inspire us to forget the things that are behind and press forward to that which lies ahead. There are those who are discouraged because they are not perfect. But if they look at others they will find that they, too, are imperfect and we realize that we are not in this struggle alone.

We should rise from our failures and set a lofty goal and move in that direction. We should use our failures as a means for growth and development. Each of us has a place to fill in the symphony of life. There is room for the smaller and less important instruments also. They help to form the kind of music that God intends to make with the great orchestra that He has.

In our spiritual lives, too, there are failures. We all admit that we aren't at the point that we should be. We can fret about our sinfulness, or we can move ahead creatively in the Christian life. If we let our distresses and our disappointments rule our lives they will rob us of the joy of Christian living. Then we are accomplishing nothing. But we must rise from our failures and press on towards something higher.

Real victorious living is only experienced when you face the future with a victorious and living Lord. It's then that we are filled with hope that is doubtless and eternal. The disciples came to Jesus one time when they had tried to cast out a demon and hadn't succeeded. They asked "Why couldn't we cast out the demon?" They were eager to know why they had failed. Jesus told them that it was because of their little faith. They lacked faith — the faith that could move mountains!

You and I, as we face the world today, with all the distress, the pain, the frustrations, ought to think not of how much we have failed — but we should rise up from these experiences and reach towards something higher. The real road of life is one of victory for the Christian.

Thought for the week:

The real reason of unselfishness is learned at the feet of Jesus. His whole life is a beautiful illustration of unselfish giving for the benefit of others. Christ has every right to demand of us that we should deny ourselves and follow Him. This is also the pathway that leads to health and wholeness.

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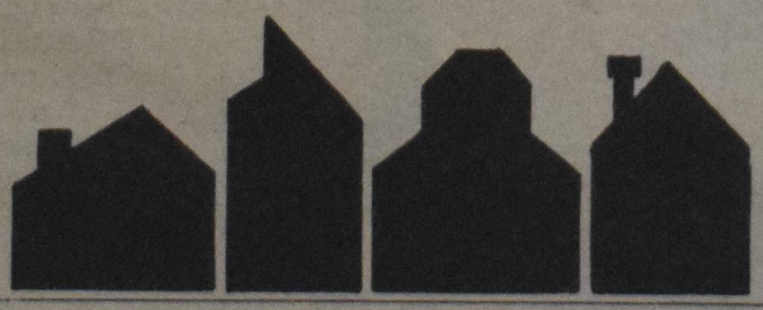

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Education

Government pays for East-West student exchange

Photo #1: Staff and students at Old Fort Henry, Kingston, ON.
Photo #2: Mr. Henry Contant, Abbotsford, C.S.S. with some students at the bakery in Upper Canada village.
Photo #3: Mr. Alex Patterson, M.P. Fraser Valley East, 2 executive assistants, staff and students of both schools at Ottawa.

by Mike Hoyer

Mr. Hoyer is a teacher at Quinte Christian High School in Belleville, ON.

In April and June, the first graduating classes of Abbotsford Christian Secondary School in Abbotsford, BC, and Quinte Christian High School in Belleville, ON, conducted a cross-Canada exchange. This exchange became a reality through the Open House Canada program, of the Secretary of State. The aim of this program is to foster understanding and unity among Canadians.

Prior to the exchange, the students and staff were "twinned" and carried on an informal correspondence for a number of months. Then in April the Quinte students headed West. They were a nervous bunch of students, hesitant to get off the airport bus to meet their partners.

The week in British Columbia featured tours of Vancouver, Victoria, local industry, scenic and historical sites. As well, the students were in a position to worship with, and fellowship with, families of similar backgrounds, mostly Christian Reformed.

This week was followed by a 2 month break where students could complete their studies and write their final exams prior to graduation. Then the westerners headed east on an all-night flight to find themselves led around Toronto for a day — from the CN Tower, the world's tallest freestanding structure, to small ethnic markets and large malls which dotted Toronto.

After a Sunday worship and picnic the students all went on a whirlwind tour of the federal parliament in Ottawa, a tour of the Gatineau Hills in Quebec, a visit to Upper Canada Village and Old Fort Henry, to view the civil and military reconstructions of life in Canada a century ago. This was followed by local trips.

A closing banquet was held, attended by students, parents and five local dignitaries. Awards were presented and parting comments were made. It was at this point that no one wanted to leave for the inevitable — home. Friendships had been formed, bonds which will never be broken.

The overwhelming response of the Quinte students' trek west centred on their appreciation of the beauty, splendour and vastness of God's creation in the mountain ranges. The Abbotsford students were struck with the 200 year history found on the eastern doorstep, the history which gave Canada its unique place in the world today.

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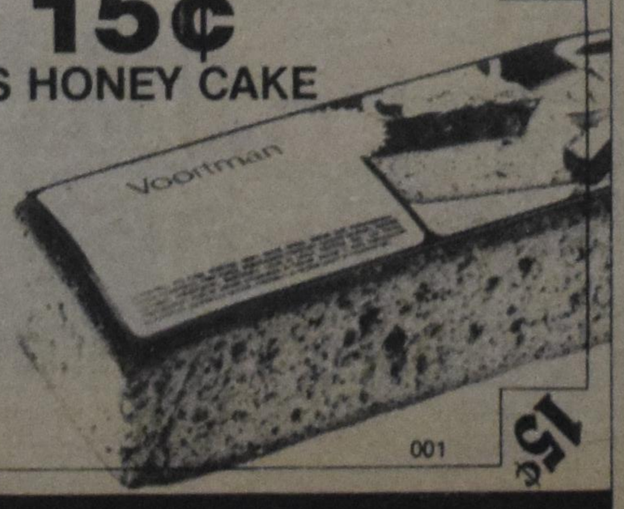

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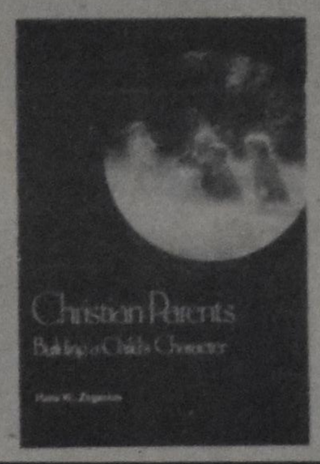

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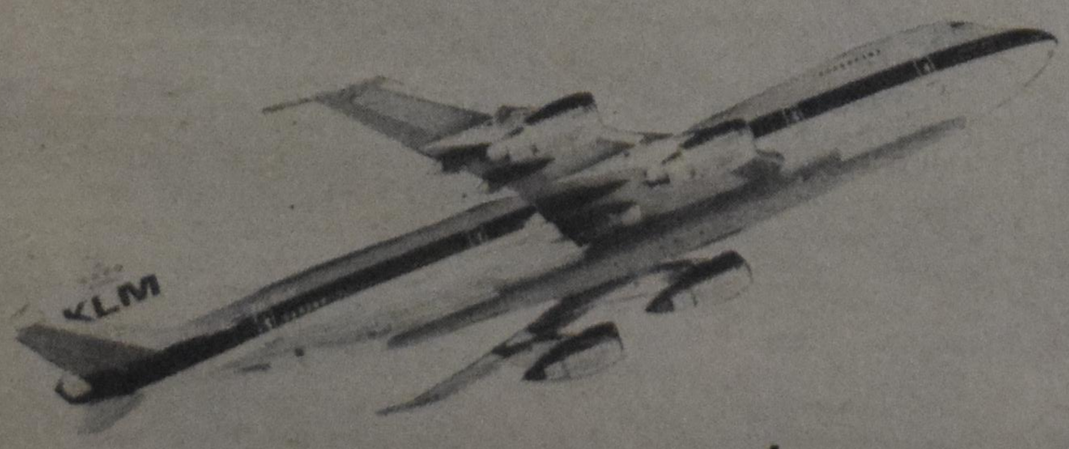

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Robert, our special son

Robert Witte

by Gertie Witte

Mrs. Witte lives in St. Catharines and writes about her special years with Robert.

On a Sunday in 1963 a notice appeared in our church bulletin. It was an urgent plea from the Children's Aid Society (C.A.S.) to open our homes for foster children. After some serious discussions, we decided to apply. Talks with social workers followed, letters of recommendation were asked for and written. All six of us were given T.B. tests and health checkups. And then we waited.

I was really looking forward to doing this work. I love babies and, since at that time there was an overflow of newborn babies, we had applied for a newborn one. My only fear was: could I say goodbye to them when they would go for adoption? I need not have feared. When our little son arrived, he came to stay.

On the day of our 16th wedding anniversary, May 15, Robert arrived. He was only five days old and weighed a little over five pounds. He had blond hair and blue eyes; a cute baby. Our children were delighted and so were we. Robert took his formula well and slept well and everything seemed to be OK.

Soon, however, I found something wrong with his spine. It felt as though there were parts missing. I took him to the clinic of the C.A.S. and told the doctor there what I had found. He checked the baby's spine and went all over him. The verdict: he had brain damage and spine damage, resulting in mental retardation. Moreover, he had neurofibromatosis, meaning he had tumors all through his body. They were indicated by light brown spots on his skin and could cause a lot of problems. On account of all this he was not expected to walk or talk until he was five or six years old, if at all. Toilet training was a big question mark. Later on we heard that his lifespan was six, or at the most, seven years. But at that time, that was not known to us.

I remember that I came home from the clinic and went straight to my neighbour, had a coffee and cried. Then I gathered him in my arms and took him home. When I put him in his crib I told him: "You stay with Mamma, sweetheart." It was as simple as that. And as serious as an oath.

Robert was an easy baby. His nickname was Ponk. Slowly he began to take an interest in things around him. He had a slow, lovely smile. We all loved to play with him and did that often, to his great delight. When he made a crawling motion to reach for the soap dish, we were elated. Finally, he tried to sit up. We sat him down and cheerfully he keeled over, but finally he managed to sit up, first with support, later alone.

In the meantime, a cyst developed in the roof of his mouth. An oral surgeon removed it, but soon it was back again. Then Robert was taken to the hospital to have his tonsils removed together with the cyst. He was not even two years old. Soon it grew in again and we were sent to the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, where he was operated on. By that time there were two cysts, one of them covering part of his upper gums. His whole jaw was crooked and Robert was never able to chew properly. He was always on blended food. It never seemed to bother him though, he was always happy.

He was thrilled with lights and music and had an excellent feeling for rhythm. He loved to be sung to and played with. Once he could glide on his stomach he was forever underfoot. He learned to stand on his own two feet and when he mastered that we tried to teach him to walk. We placed him with his back toward us, his feet on ours and so we walked. He squealed with delight, like he did with everything. After he had learned the feeling of 'walking' that way, we placed his feet in front of ours and told him to walk.

Then his behaviour started to change. He was vicious sometimes and ripped his bedclothing and everything he could get hold of. He was put on medication for it. When he was five years old Robert was tested in the Children Research Centre in London. He did not meet the requirements for adoption, more on his physical handicaps than on his mental ones — he was only mildly retarded.

The only two things that were good were: the marrow of his bones was fine compared to the other cases like him and his hearing was very sharp. All the rest was lacking. We were not allowed to adopt him.

Shortly after that Robert got trouble with his left eye; it moved to the corner of his socket and sometimes it was throbbing. We took him to an eye doctor, who bandaged up his good eye for he thought the left eye was lazy. But nothing helped or changed and after about half a year of this, we again were sent to the Hospital for Sick Children to see a specialist there. It took him only a short while to find out.

The same evening we got a phone call from a neuro-surgeon, Dr. Hendrick, who explained to us that Robert had a cyst in the brain and they were going to operate on him the very next morning. The agony of waiting through that operation was not soon forgotten. When Dr. Hendrick finally came out to tell us what he had found and we asked him what Robert's chances were, he only said: "Enjoy him while you have him."

After his recovery, Robert was put on radium treatment in the Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto. For three months every second day, I went up to be with him.

Lucky for us, a break in the treatment enabled us to take him on our long-awaited trip to Holland. It was there that his hair started to fall out as a result of the treatment and later on, when we asked him where his hair was, he always said: "In Oma's house." He stayed bald a long time. When to our great joy we saw new hair coming in, he got a lovely head of curls.

The position of his left eye had not changed; he had tunnel vision in the right eye and as such he always tilted his head to look at everything. Coordination was poor. He was so weak when we finally brought him home, he could not even sit up. But as soon as he was home, he was doing fine and in a few weeks was able to go to school. He was always picked up by a special bus and he loved to go to school once he was used to it and that took quite a while. For his stay in Toronto, away from his home, and all the pain he suffered, frustrated him a great deal. He was very fearful to move even a few feet away from me. He was always with me, "helping" me.

The following year brought new problems. Robert was often nauseated, which became worse as the days wore on and slowly he lost consciousness. The year before, a shunt had been inserted in the cyst in order to drain the fluids into the bowels. Unknown to us, the shunt had cracked and was blocking the fluid, causing the cyst to swell. He needed corrective surgery.

He recovered very well from that and he had about five good years. He was toilet trained and we drilled it into him: "Tell us when you have to go." He always announced: "Me go to bathroom."

His speech was not clear and that was sometimes frustrating for him. The odd time I could not get it at all, he would say: "Mamma cannot hear very well!" He learned to count to twenty in English and to ten in Dutch and French. But he mixed up the alphabet. He could tell colours and some shapes, but never learned to spell his name. Robert never came to know that two apples and two apples were four apples, but he knew where the apples were and that's what counts.

You could never just tell him anything — you always had to show him. He learned to dress himself, clothes backwards, inside out and it took a lot of patience to teach him. Once he had a T-shirt with a big yellow school bus in the front. Of course he had put it on backwards. I put him in front of a mirror and said: "Now look what you did. Where is the school bus?" He took one look and said: "Oh, oh, me parked school bus wrong way again."

Who can preach against that? He had a delightful way of looking at things and taught us all a lot. His digestive system was very poor and as a result he burped a lot. One time, when we were in a cottage, he had a little bit of coke and sure enough, he burped. And then he said: "Hey, burps come along on holiday too!"

Robert's memory was sharp. All of a sudden he would say: "Member?" and he would come up with something we had done or what had happened years ago. We had almost forgotten but he remembered. You could take him anywhere in town and further; the next time around he still knew the way.

He was seven years old and still was not a member of our church. We loved our church dearly and it bugged me that this lovely child did not officially belong, for he was ours, adopted or not. So we talked to our minister, Rev. De Bolster, and he obtained special permission to baptize Robert.

On October 22, 1972, our little son was baptized. How vividly we remember! The church was packed. Rev. De Bolster took him by the hand and presented him to the congregation. Our whole family was on the platform and Robert was looking up at his big friend with his lovely crooked smile. There were tears in many eyes! When we came home, Robert joyfully said: "Me lucky boy, me baptized two times."

Countless times he had seen babies being baptized; he never questioned if he was or why he was baptized now. He was just "me lucky boy." He also had two 'mimmisters' for Rev. Kuntz was already with us, too.

Robert loved Sunday school and on his way to class he always waved to the minister. When he was through with Sunday school, I taught him the Apostle's Creed. He called it Creep but he got to know it well. On a certain Sunday we had another minister and we had to recite the Nicene Creed. Robert started to say it too, then he heard it was different and he said out loud: "Mama, mimmister don't know!"

He also wanted to hold the collection bags and wanted to take part in the Lord's Supper. When we decided to let him hold the trays, he was elated. As soon as we were home, he said: "Me big boy now, me helped with the beer in church."

He wanted to know things, though. Why did we have the Lord's Supper and why did the minister say, "Eat, this is my body. Drink, this is my blood. How could we tell him so he would understand? Moreover, did I myself understand what it all meant? Hard questions. It forced me to be very honest with myself and that happened time and time again. How could I honestly answer him? Flawlessly, he always picked up any hesitation on my part. It had to be true, yet how could I explain?

I showed him a picture of myself and asked who that was — mamma. How many mammas were there now? One, two mammas. Then I asked: "Is this (the picture) a real mamma too?" Yes, that was a real mamma. So I gave him the picture in his hand and said: "Here is

your mamma. She can bring you to bed and tuck you in." Oh no, that didn't work. When I asked: "Why not, that is a real mamma, too?" he replied: "No way. Here is mamma; you bring me to bed." Now he saw the difference between real and the picture and so he was able to grasp the difference between the body of the Lord and the 'picture' of it. And once he knew, he never forgot.

Robert had his own unique way of saying things. A funeral procession he called "a wedding for the dead," a parade on Remembrance Day was a "party for the dead soldiers." At school they always made a weather picture every day and one morning the sky really looked grey. He looked up and said: "oh, oh, clouds are going to cry all day." Somehow, a rainy day did not seem to be so dreary.

In the month of January, I always brought some Forsythia branches in the house and one morning he excitedly called us: "Come, look, there's a flower on mamma's pretzels." I had never seen the resembiance, but he did.

School meant an awful lot to him. He was forever talking about his school, his bus, his bus driver and his kids. He loved his teacher, Mrs. Strawn, who was also very fond of him.

We often took him along when going out. If we were eating out and they came to ask if we wanted something from the bar, he always said: "Me tea, please." He got it too. He travelled to Montreal as well as Grand Rapids to visit his sisters and loved every minute of it.

He had friends everywhere and made sure he saw them too, collecting things. "Me spoiled brat" he often said. In many stores people knew him. He was wearing orthopedic shoes and once in awhile we dropped in to have his feet checked. Shortly after he had been there, he wanted to go again, but I said he did not need that for he had just been. He answered: "Me can say hi to man" and in we went to say hello to his big friend.

I had a dear friend who was blind and once I took Robert along to see her. I had told him that the lady could not see, but as soon as he came to her bed he exclaimed: "Hey, she can look, she has her eyes open!" To him open eyes meant you can see.

At home he just could not understand. So I took a flashlight and showed it to him. With the 'on' switch it worked, with the 'off' switch it did not, but it was still a flashlight. He knew it had batteries and to make sure I showed them to him and then took them out and gave the empty flash to him, telling him to make it work. He said, "No way, won't work."

Thus I was able to explain why my friend's eyes could not see although they were open. Something inside us, just like the batteries, make them see and when that is broken, we can not see anymore; there is no light. Later on, when this friend was dying and I cried, he asked if she was going to Jesus and I said, "Yes, very soon." He replied, "Then she can look!" No need for my tears; for her it would only be gain. With four simple words our little apostle set me straight.

The Christmas following shortly after a member of our congregation, Mr. Ippel, passed away, we were on our way to church. Suddenly, Robert said excitedly: "Hey, Mr. Ippel can go to Jesus' birthday party. Can he have a piece of Jesus' birthday cake too?" Touched by his simple, joyful faith, I said he certainly would. Then Robert sat back in the car and sang 'Happy Birthday' for Jesus. We had a lovely Christmas.

Music was his chief amusement — he had stacks of records, piled up like pancakes. We gave him a record player and he was able to play his own music. Dutch, English, he knew them all by heart and often sang along with the, skips and all, rocking himself as he did. Sometimes he came and asked for our records to play for him. He was very fond of 'The Holy City' and the 'Messiah.' One day when we played the 'Halleluja' chorus for him he sang every Halleluja along till the last one, then he sat back and said, "Boy lots of Hallelujahs today."

Robert could not jump, skip or run. Sometimes we saw him rather wistfully looking at other kids and one day he came in and said, "Me can not walk very well." I had seen him looking over the fence at the neighbour's kids playing, so I knew what he was up to.

I told him I would buy a wheelchair and then run with him, very fast. Oh no, he did not need a wheelchair; those were for sick and crippled kids. And he had seen too many of them during his hospital stays. Then I said to him, "Listen, Ponk, do you have feet?" He looked down and said yes, he had two feet. Could he walk or did he think it was better to have a wheelchair? "No way," he exclaimed, "me can walk!" And cheerfully he went out again. But I cried.

Our children were always busy with him, teasing, playing, teaching. His two ears were for hearing, his two eyes to see, his nose to blow and his mouth to talk. When asked why he had two feet, he looked down at his feet, then up again and answered, "Me got two socks." Reason enough to have two feet!

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Popular Music

Fear of indifference: Sandinista, THE CLASH

by Bill Van Dyk
Music critic

If one were to judge the state of the world by the dominant musical styles, at least in rock music, one might conclude from the Sixties that the world was full of injustice and oppression, economic disparity and lovelessness, warfare and tension. Rock music from the Sixties is full of just such an awareness, and a commitment to an ideal of something better.

The Seventies are a different story. Music from the Seventies (disco, in particular) would seem to indicate that the world's most urgent problem was the unresolved state of certain spontaneous sexual impulses. Music of the Seventies shows a pre-occupation with the self, and an indifference to anything outside of one's particular pleasure zones.

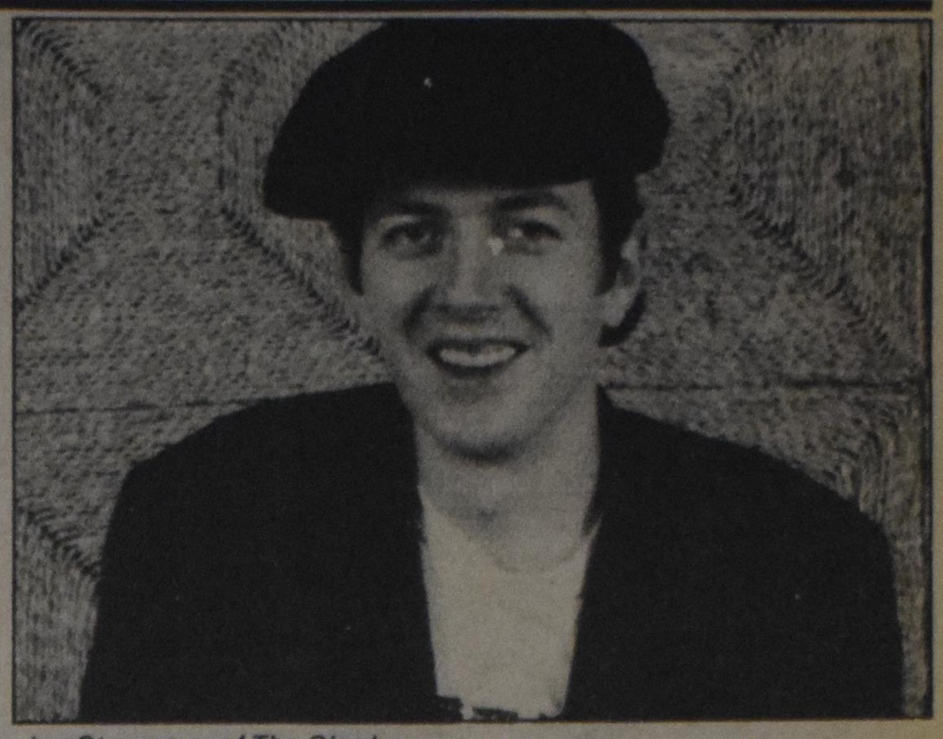
Outside of the mainstream of a.m. rock music, of course, we still had our Bruce Springsteens, Neil Youngs, and Bruce Cockburns, but the air-waves were packed with music by Kiss, the Bee Gees, and Barry Manilow or Kenny Rogers.

Then, towards the end of the Seventies, a rebellion against pop musical styles began. It was called "new wave." Its most radical exponents were called "punk." It originated in Britain among the bored and alienated youths who believed that mainstream pop music did not speak for them. Its code of ethics included a complete rejection of slick studio techniques and all other trappings of decadent commercialism. They wrote and sang angry songs about alienation and fear. Their lifestyles and performances reflected a deep-seated anger and frustration at life, in a time of declining expectations and increasing world tension. They offered no hope, no optimism, just the wrath of a dislocated generation.

Punk rock soon began to dissipate itself in a nihilistic frenzy. The Sex Pistols faded away after the sensational trial of lead singer Sid Vicious, and the Deadboys have lost their novelty value. Punk will continue to be around, on the fringes for a while, or in bowlderized commercial versions like the Police and the Knack; but otherwise it has descended into another mere fashion, or, at best, an expression of impotent anger. (Billy Joel and Linda Ronstadt have both recently released punk influenced albums, of which Ronstadt's is truer to the form.)

The Clash is one of the few survivors of the punk rock movement, for a very good reason. They are easily one of the most talented groups of musicians in all of popular music today. Their latest release, an ambitious three-album set called *Sandinista* (after the triumphant rebels of Nicaragua), has been universally acclaimed as a masterpiece. In fact, I have never seen such unanimity among rock music critics since Bruce Springsteen released *Born to Run* seven years ago.

Sandinista is an astonishing, startling recording. Like punk rock, it confronts the world with anger and aggression; unlike punk, it offers hope and humanity instead of despair and frustration. It is also unlike punk in the tremendous breadth of vision and social consciousness expressed in its lyrics; and its imaginative and innovative — one might almost say playful — musical structures are far beyond anything mainstream rock music has ever dreamed of. It is clear evidence that the Clash has matured in both wisdom and musical talent.



Joe Strummer of The Clash

Condemnation

A further sign of this maturation is the lack of naivete. Whereas protest rock in the Sixties tended to focus, a little unfairly, on American injustices, The Clash has chosen to indict Russia for Afghanistan, China for Tibet, as well as the Americans for Central America. They even praise America for its withdrawal of support for the dictatorial Somoza regime in Nicaragua, (expressing optimism which seems to have been unjustified in the light of current American policy.) "We're neither left nor right," says Paul Simenon, bassist and songwriter for the group, "but we sing of the oppressed because that's who and what we are."

And it is the oppressed, the "least of these," who form the subject of their songs, from members of a work gang, slaving under a cruel overseer, to a broken and crippled veteran of the Second World War who exists only on memories "forwarded from Hell"; from the alienated and unemployed youth in the housing projects in Britain, to the victims of extremist violence in Central America.

In a world of increasing racism and indifference, The Clash has placed itself squarely on the side of the oppressed. A significant reason for their departure from the punk movement was, in fact, their rejection of the self-righteous nihilism of groups like the Sex Pistols. The Clash was determined to offer hope.

Humanism

But this is also the source of another great difference between The Clash and protest groups from the Sixties. It is also a point crucial to a Christian understanding of the message of *Sandinista*. The Clash does not indulge in idealism. The musicians believe that, as repugnant as violence is, there may be situations in which it is necessary in order to overcome a greater evil. Their endorsement of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua is a good example. And their belief that violent racism must be met with resistance is another. In these cases, they believe that hope can only be realistically offered in the context of human action.

Whether or not their ideals correspond to the Calvinist idea of a just war, I shall leave to the theologians to decide. It is plain, in any case, that the Clash does not see Jesus as the answer.

True to form, The Clash rejects all commercial pop-rock forms as decadent. It is amazing, in this respect, that the musicians have, nevertheless, created such a stunning masterpiece in terms of musical construction. Utilizing virtually every popular musical style of the past fifty years, including the lastest West Indian styles of ska, dubbing, and reggae, and even Celtic folk style here and there, they have created a masterwork of textures and rhythms ranging from the overpowering to the sublime, all of it stamped with their own indelible personalities, all of it rock tough. Nothing is handed to the listener on a silver platter.

One is invited to listen carefully, to follow the lyrics, to think about the message, and to come away disturbed, perhaps, at his own complacency. "We're much more interested in making a social statement that will make people aware of what's going on," Simenon declares.

Joe Strummer, another writer and guitarist for the group adds, "Music goes directly to the head and heart of a human being, more directly and in more dimensions than the written word."

Influential

There is no question but that they have succeeded. One

Continued on page 13

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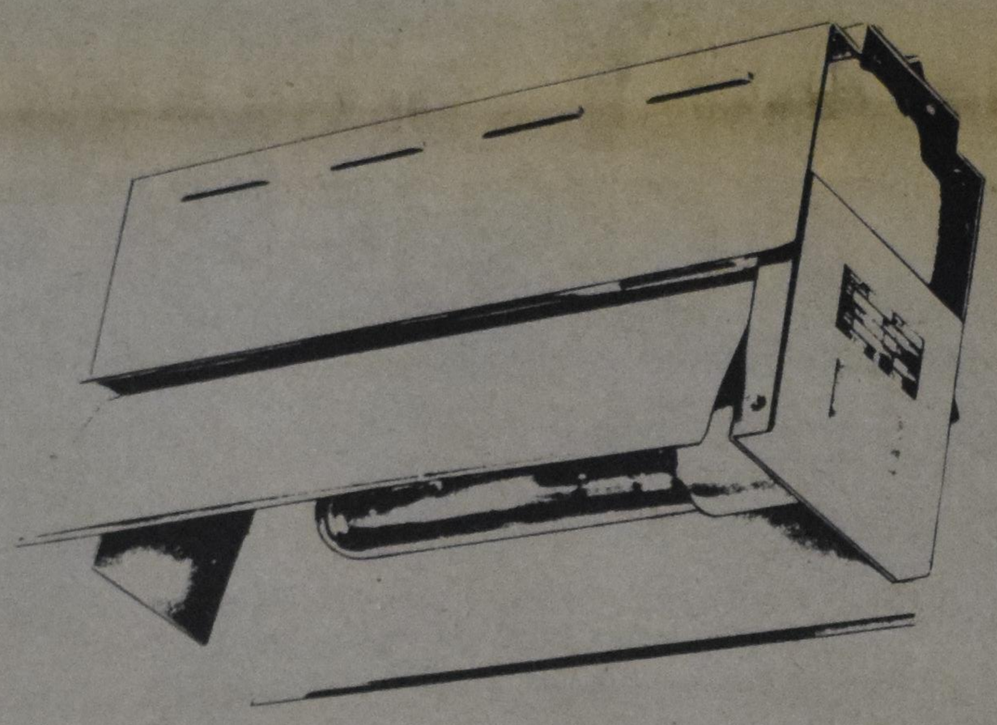

By
PHILIPS

The growing process

Plant growth depends on a number of factors such as the amount of light, heat, water, carbon dioxide and nutrients that are available. These growth factors do not act independently of each other but in combination so that providing they are present in the correct proportions and at the right time, optimum plant growth and flowering can take place. On the other hand, this also means that if any one of the growing factors is inadequate the plant cannot derive the full benefit that it should be receiving from the other factors, however adequate they may be. By cultivating plants in greenhouses it is possible to make most of the growth factors as near to the ideal as possible. But what of the growth factor 'light'?

This aspect of a plant's environment is subject to great fluctuations if recourse is not made to the use of artificial light. In most places the level of daylight can vary greatly from day to day and even from hour to hour. In temperate climes, when the summer sun is high in the sky, a plant can sometimes receive much light and heat. Thus, when this is the case, the other growth factors must be supplied in ample measure to keep the plant satisfied. On the other hand, in the winter, no matter how many nutrients are supplied, a plant will become droopy if it does not receive sufficient light. However, if a lighting system is installed, the missing growth factor can very easily be adjusted to the desired level so that the plant can develop in a healthy state.

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The Clash

Continued from page 12

would have to be less than human to remain unmoved, for example, after listening to a song like "One More Time," which describes, with fearsome forboding, the tensions and fears that continue to build up in American ghettos (which are, in some quarters, expected to explode in violence again before the end of the decade), or a song like "The Rebel Waltz" which describes the hopeless and forlorn idealism of Third World revolutionaries.

I would not be surprised to see *Sandinista* become the most influential rock album of the next ten years. There is no question that it belongs up there with the top two or three rock albums of all time, in terms of quality, achievement, and significance. It is also a revolutionary album insofar as its techniques are as far removed from the prevailing style as the Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was in 1967; though The Clash must share their achievement in innovation with another new wave group called The Talking Heads, a group also worth watching.

I would remind potential listeners that *Sandinista* is not an easy album to listen to. It is uncompromising in the presentation of a disturbing and urgent message. The best way to approach it is, I think, to allow yourself at least five or six listenings before beginning to judge.

I might add that by threatening to disband the group and refuse to release the album, The Clash managed to have Columbia Records drop the price of this three album set to around fifteen dollars, which is a bargain today.

It goes without saying that comparisons of The Clash to groups like AC/DC or XTC would be less than interesting.

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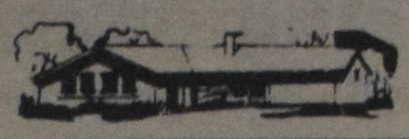

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Blijmoedig oud worden

Blijmoedig oud worden. Ik denk dat we als seniors wel graag psalm 71 lezen, de psalm voor de ouderen. Here Gij zijt mijn verwachting, mijn vertrouwen van mijn jeugd aan. Er staat boven: Here verlaat mij niet in de ouderdom.

Paulus spreekt nog al veel over de blijdschap, vooral in zijn brief aan de Filippenzen. „Verblijdt u in de Here." Dat betekent natuurlijk dat je echt blij bent, vooral van binnen omdat je de Here Jezus gevonden en beleden hebt als je Heiland en Zaligmaker, dat je weten mag dat je zonden vergeven zijn, dat de Heiland een plaats voor je bereidt in de hemelse heerlijkheid.

Je kunt het als je oud bent geworden soms zo benauwd hebben, je kunt ziek zijn, er naar aan toe zijn, ja soms heb ik oude mensen bezocht in het laatste stadium, in het ziekenhuis, en ze waren er erg aan toe, een hoopje ellende. Maar een vrouw die zo ziek was, en zo'n pijn had zei toch tegen me: dominee, ik ben van binnen zo blij, want de Here Jezus is bij mij. En iemand anders zei: Al ging ik ook door een dal van doodsschaduwen, ik ben niet bang, want God is met mij en Hij vertroost mij.

Van heel wat oude mensen moet ik het zeggen dat het waar is in hun leven; ik heb veel verdriet maar ik ben toch blij, en ik ga blijmoedig de toekomst tegemoet, ik weet mijn verlosser leeft. Maar . . . 'k zal het dominee maar vertellen, mijn man en ik praten er niet zo gemakkelijk over, maar we hebben een zoon, hij is ook getrouwd, hij heeft een lieve vrouw en aardige kinderen, maar 'hij doet er niet meer aan,' hij komt niet meer in de kerk. „Dat is nu mijn groot verdriet dat sommigen die ik liefheb God niet kennen. Aan die gedachte kan mijn ziel niet wennen, en dat is nu mijn enigst groot verdriet." (Nellie Van Kol).

En dan die kleinkinderen. Ik denk zo, er zijn heel wat gelovige ouders en grootouders werkzaam met hun kinderen en kleinkinderen voor de troon der genade; de Here moge genadig zijn en het leven, eeuwige leven geven! Volhouden, pleiten op de beloften van het verbond der genade, pleiten op de doop, het zegel der belofte. Pleiten op het offer van Christus dat genoegzaam is voor ieder, vragen: Here werk in de koude harten met uw Heilige Geest. Open ze net als bij Lydia in de Bijbel, zodat er acht gegeven wordt op het blijde evangelie van genade en vrede door het bloed des Lams. Zoals mijn vrouw en ik het een paar weken geleden nog van een onzer kennisen hoorden (toen we vroegen naar hun kinderen): onze zoon en zijn vrouw komen weer geregeld in de kerk, hij heeft een getuigenis afgelegd waar we versteld van stonden. 16 jaar hebben we hier voor hen gebeden, en nu heeft de Here ons verhoord; jullie kunnen begrijpen hoe blij we zijn!

Ik kreeg een brief van een oude man, bijna 80 jaar, vol van lof voor God, die Hem geleid heeft al die jaren en nu zo graag zingt van Gods genade. Hij zoekt anderen op die ziek zijn, en ontlokt het blijde getuigenis: De Heer is mijn Herder, 'k heb al wat mij lust! En straks, zo schrijft hij, als de Here mij tot Zich neemt, dan mag ik Jezus zien in zijn liefde voor zondaren. Hij kan en wil en zal, in nood zelfs, bij het naderen van de dood volkomen uitkomst geven. Zo wordt een senior met blijdschap ouder! En als u zo blij van binnen bent, dan moet u het toch ook maar van buiten zijn om het anderen te tonen. Dan werkt God door u ook voor anderen. Dan hebt u toch nog wel iets te doen. Denk maar veel aan de oude Simeon die in de tempel zegt: Here, mijn ogen hebben uw zaligheid gezien! Denk ook aan Jakob, die terwijl hij zijn zonen vanaf zijn sterfbed een voor een toespreekt, ineens zegt: Op uw heil wacht ik, o Here! Dan bent u zelfs aan het einde van u aardse leven nog een zegen voor anderen.

Daarom bidt de Psalmist: "O God, Gij hebt mij geleerd van mijn jeugd aan en tot nog toe verkondig ik uw wonderen. Daarom ook, terwijl de ouderdom en de grijsheid daar is, verlaat mij niet o God, totdat ik aan dit geslacht uw arm verkondige, aan ieder die komt, uw sterkte." Hij ziet heel het leven onder de hoede Gods. De jeugd, maar ook de ouderdom. Daarom is het slot van Psalm 71 een lofzang. Dat betekent, dat de dichter overwonnen heeft in het geloof. God zal hem in de ouderdom niet verlaten. God zal hem troosten in de moeiten en moeilijkheden van de ouderdom. Dan wil hij God gaan prijzen. Mijn lippen zullen jubelen wanneer ik U zal psalmzingen, en mijn ziel, die Gij heb verlost.

J. VanHarmelen

Hulp aan mensen van El Salvador

door George Bonavia

(Canadian Scene) — De Minister van Werkverschaffing en Immigratie Lloyd Axworthy heeft maatregelen aangekondigd betreffende hulpverschaffing aan mensen in Canada die getroffen zijn door de huidige politieke situatie in El Salvador.

„Gezien de onzekerheid die bestaat aangaande de huidige politieke situatie in El Salvador zijn er een aantal positieve stappen die wij nu kunnen nemen om Salvadorans die nu in Canada zijn, te helpen en te proberen hen te verenigen met hun gezinsleden die nog in dat land zijn en door het conflict bedreigd worden," zo zei de heer Axworthy. De minister maakte de volgende maatregelen bekend:

Salvadorans die op legale wijze voor een bezoek naar Canada gekomen zijn en hier familie hebben die voor hen borg kunnen staan — onder de immigratie bepalingen betreffende de zg. family class of die van assisted relatives — kunnen als immigranten toegelaten worden, mits zij aan de vereisten betreffende gezondheid en toelaatbaarheid uit het oogpunt van nationale veiligheid voldoen.

Zij die op legale wijze in Canada gekomen zijn, doch hier geen familie hebben, kunnen de minister vragen om een werkvergunning. Als na een periode van zes maanden blijkt dat de betreffende persoon werk gevonden heeft dan kan hij, als hij aan alle andere eisen voldoet, aanvragen als „landed immigrant" beschouwd te worden.

Canadezen en vaste inwoners van Canada met familieleden die uit El Salvador hebben moeten vluchten kunnen geholpen worden deze familieleden te helpen, mits zij zelf aanvaardbare regelingen kunnen treffen aangaande huisvesting, e.d.

Salvadorans die legaal in Canada zijn als bezoekers en hier willen blijven totdat de situatie in hun eigen land weer wat stabieler is kunnen bij het Canada Immigration Centre om verlenging van hun visum vragen. Zij die gedurende deze tijd werk willen zoeken om in hun onderhoud te voorzien kunnen hiertoe een vergunning krijgen.

In het recente verleden zijn mensen uit Lebanon, Cyprus en Ethiopie op soortgelijke wijze geholpen.

De heer Axworthy zei dat deze stappen genomen zijn met het oog op de noodzakelijkheid om de situatie in El Salvador nauwkeurig te volgen en op verantwoordelijke manier tegemoet te komen aan de humanitaire aspecten van het probleem. Er wordt regelmatig contact onderhouden met het Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Bovendien hebben ambtenaren van het immigratie departement een bezoek aan het gebied zelf gebracht en gesproken met authoriteiten die zich met de problemen en de oplossing daarvan bezig houden.

„De UNHCR is van mening dat het mogelijk is om de meeste mensen die uit het land gevlucht zijn te repatrieren, zodra de rust in het land weergekeerd is," zo zegt de heer Axworthy. Wij zijn het daarmee eens. Er zullen echter ook mensen zijn die niet naar hun land terug zullen durven gaan uit vrees voor vervolging. In die gevallen kunnen wij zien of zij als politieke refugees toegelaten kunnen worden.

Bovendien kunnen particuliere groepen mensen laten overkomen van waar ook ter wereld.

Te laat

Ik heb je vaak alleen gelaten
wanneer ik je niet troosten kon;
ik heb zo dikwijls zitten praten
wanneer ik beter zwijgen kon;
ik heb je niet de steun gegeven
die je van mij verwachten kon;
ik leefde zó mijn eigen leven
dat ik je zelfs vergeten kon.
En nu God je heeft weggenomen
omdat Hij je gebruiken kon,
nu wilde ik, dat je wéér kon komen,
dat ik je nog eens zeggen kon
hoe schuldig ik me soms kan voelen
omdat ik niet deed, wat ik kon,
omdat ik niet, naar Gods bedoelen
wat van Zijn vreugd verspreiden kon.
Maar wat voorbij is, kan ik niet ontlopen,
hoe vurig ik ook wou, dat 't kòn;
en daarom blijf ik hierop hopen:
dat Christus deed, wat ik niet kon.

—Nel Benschop

in „De vogel van het Woord"
Kok, Kampen

Als je het mij vraagt

Wat denk je van de onderwijstaak van de kerk? (1)

Syrt Wolters, Victoria, BC

Ja, wat zal ik daarvan zeggen? Wat ik me van mijn jonge jaren kan herinneren was die onderwijstaak van de kerk nogal beperkt; zondagschool, catechisatieklassen en catechismus preken. Ik kan me niet herinneren dat de kerk zich meer met onderwijs bemoeide dan in deze drie vormen. O ja, we hadden de knapenvereniging, de jongelingsvereniging, meisjesvereniging, vrouwenvereniging, mannenvereniging, kiesvereniging en vergaderingen van Patrimonium.

Maar al dat verenigingswerk was eigenlijk geen kerk-werk. Onderwijs, strikt genomen, werd door de kerk alleen maar gegeven in de drie genoemde vormen. Toen we in Canada kwamen, werd er door de kerk niet veel meer aan gedaan dan in Nederland. De zondagschool was hier nogal een sterk ontwikkeld instituut. Of het evenredig krachtig was in invloed op de kerk, nou, daar ben ik nog niet zo zeker van.

Dat herinnert me aan een gesprek dat ik eens had met iemand, die jarenlang „superintendent" van de zondagschool in een Baptisten kerk was geweest. Hij sprak er altijd enthousiast over dat zijn zondagschool nu al voor meer dan 20 jaar tussen de 600 en 800 kinderen als leerlingen had. Ik kon niet nalaten de opmerking te maken dat de kerk waartoe hij behoorde uit de naden moest barsten vanwege de gestadige groei. Zijn antwoord verbaasde me zeer. Hij zei: „Nee, dat is eigenlijk de schaduwzijde van mijn werk in de zondagschool, want een groot deel van de leerlingen die alle klassen doorlopen hebben, zie je nooit meer in de kerk." Toen dacht ik bij mezelf, nou, dan heb je ook een zondagschool.

Dr. Albert Greene, directeur van Alta Vista College in Seattle, zei eens tijdens een lezing over Christelijke scholen, dat hij niet veel waarde hechtte aan het zondagschool-instituut, omdat de kinderen daar niet behoorlijk leerden lezen! Hij bedoelde dat de zondagschool maar verhaaltjes vertellerij was, zonder dat men de kinderen leerde de Bijbel te lezen als heilsopenbaring.

Welnu, van dat goedkope zondagschool-onderwijs hebben wij in de Christian Reformed church ook wel ons aandeel gehad. Gelukkig heeft men dat ingezien en na enige jaren van kritiek op ons kerkelijk onderwijs heeft de Synode van 1968 alle onderwijs instanties in de Chr. Ref. Church van de baan geschoven en een Board of Publications in het leven geroepen, welke verantwoordelijk was om instructiemateriaal te produceren om alle leden in de kerk van dienst te zijn, bijna van de wieg tot het graf. Persoonlijk heb ik het genoegen gehad om de eerste zes jaren van de „Board's" bestaan classis BC te vertegenwoordigen. 'k Heb er dus voor enkele jaren met mijn neus bovenop gezeten en gezien dat er gaandeweg ander en beter instructiemateriaal beschikbaar kwam.

Denk nu niet, dat dit zonder horten en stoten is gegaan. O nee, ik herinner me dat op een van onze vergaderingen een krities artikel besproken werd in een van onze kerkelijke tijdschriften. In dat artikel werd gewaarschuwd om niet het materiaal van de „Board of Publications" te gebruiken, omdat dat helemaal de verkeerde kant uit ging. Het advies werd gegeven om maar het materiaal van de Ortodox Presbyterian Church te gebruiken, hetwelk stukken beter geacht werd. Het ironiese of laconieke van het geval was, dat op diezelfde vergadering een delegatie van twee predikanten van de Ortodox Presbyterian Church aanwezig was om de mogelijkheid te bespreken of hun kerken ook niet ons materiaal mochten gebruiken, omdat men het van veel grotere waarde achtte!

Dat de onderwijstaak van de kerk meer in het middelpunt van bespreking en grondige studie kwam moge tevens blijken uit het feit dat (ook in 1968) Dr. Arnold De Graaff zijn doctorale studies voltooide met een proefschrift over „The Educational Ministry of the Church."

We zijn nu zo'n 13 jaar verder. Het is indrukwekkend om te zien wat er al zo gepubliceerd is sinds 1968. En zo langzamerhand zijn de kerken er aan gewend geraakt dat alle kerkleden weer naar „school" gaan om de bijbel te bestuderen. Intussen hebben we ook Key '73 gehad, een evangelisatie-onderneming welke grote golven van een herleving zou te zien geven. Ik vrees dat de wereld nog geen rimpeltje vernomen heeft. 'k Heb zo'n idee dat Key '73 als een nachtkaars uitgegaan is. Een paar jaar geleden werd „Wereld Honger" aan de mensen voorgezet. Na het eerste enthousiasme schijnt de gloed daarvan ook snel te verbleken.

Het enige positieve dat we waarschijnlijk aan de crediet zijde van Key '73 en Wereld Honger Program mogen schrijven is dat in veel kerken weer bijbelstudiegroepen tot leven gekomen zijn, alhoewel ik ook hier al weer een achteruitgang meen te moeten opmerken. Het wordt ons wel gemakkelijk gemaakt. Stapels materiaal is verkrijgbaar,

Vervolg op pag. 16

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Vraag alstublieft, want u zou best eens in aanmerking kunnen komen voor bijstand vandaag, ook al hebt u dat niet in het verleden.

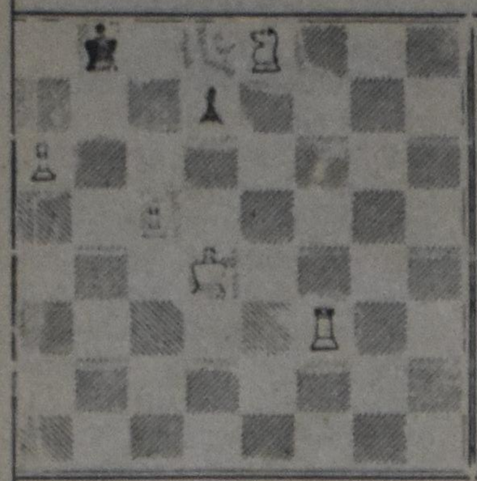
Ministry of Health
Ontario
Dennis R. Timbrell, Minister

LET'S PLAY CHESS

Editor: Pete Layer

FIRST SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN JULY

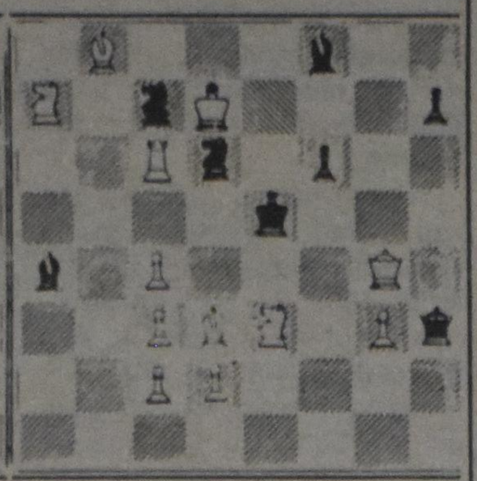
#880
W. Speckmann,
Germany, 1956
2



5

3-mover 3pts.

#881
C.W. Sheppard,
England, 1921
8



12

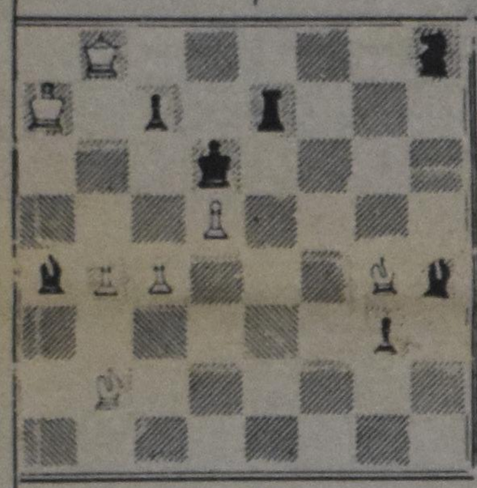
2-mover 2pts.

Comments:

1. The Black King seems to have too much room in #880. Stalemate won't be your problem! Please give the Key, threat and all variations.
2. The two-mover, #881 shows a lot of pinned pieces. Don't move them while they are pinned! I hope you can enjoy the variations. Please give the key and threat, if any.

SECOND SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN JULY

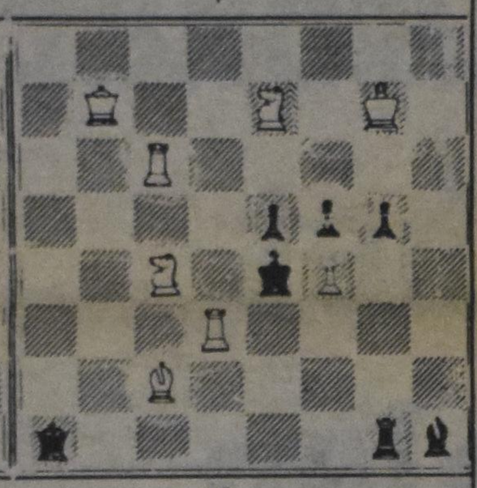
#882
C. Slagmolen,
Holland, 1972
7



8

3-mover 3 pts.

#883
G. Litwin-Staszewski,
Poland, 1972
7



8

2-mover 2 pts.

Comments

1. Both problems have the same number of pieces on the board, the Black King in the middle and the White King off to the side, but strategically placed. I will let you find out if the solutions have other items in common!
2. Please give the key, threat, and all variations for #882 and the key plus threat, if any for #883.
3. The deadline for the July problems, #880-883 is **September 20th** for all contestants. If solutions are sent on a postcard, and postmarked at your holiday place, variations are **not** necessary.

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Als je het mij vraagt . . . vervolg van pag. 15

waaruit we te kust en te keur kunnen gaan uitzoeken wat ons het meest behaagt. Veel gemeenten hebben een eigen „Onderwijs Commissie, waarschijnlijk de een meer actief en effectief dan de andere, die een leerplan voor bijna elke leeftijdsgroep heeft. 's Zondags voor de dienst van 9.30 tot 10.15 is er een klas bezig met bijbelstudie. Vijf en veertig minuten in totaal, dat is als op tijd begonnen wordt en ook werkelijk tot 10.15 door gewerkt wordt. De praktijk echter laat hier nog wel eens wat te wensen over, aan beide einden. Zo blijft er van de 45 minuten vaak niet meer over dan 30.

En wat waardevols kan men opsteken in een half uur of minder? 'k Heb ook niet de indruk dat er veel „voorstudie" gemaakt wordt.

Als me dan gevraagd wordt: Wat denk je van de onderwijstaak van de kerk, dan ben ik geneigd om me niet over-enthousiast te tonen. Om meer dan één reden. In de eerste plaats mis ik dat bij al de pogingen om weer tot opzettelijke bijbelstudie te komen, niet meer de aandacht geschonken wordt aan de verantwoordelijkheid van het gezin. Het hele onderwijsprogram schijnt er van uit te gaan dat het thuis toch niet gebeurt en dat daarom de kerk het maar overneemt. Dat vind ik een achteruitgang.

Zelf zou ik graag zien dat er materiaal geproduceerd werd, geschikt, om in een gezin te gebruiken. In ons eigen gezin hebben we de laatste jaren na de avondmaaltijd de catechismus doorgenomen. We gebruikten de moderne editie uitgegeven in blauwe boekjes door het Chr. Ref. Publishing House. Als regel deden we een hele week over een „Zondag," tenzij een nogal lange verdeeld werd over twee weken. We gingen de vragen en de antwoorden samen reciteren, moeilijke woorden werden verklaard en vragen besproken. Gewoonlijk niet meer dan 15 minuten per dag. Vooral de dagelijkse herhaling maakte het interessant en erg leerzaam. Zondag sloegen we over, zodat we elke week zo'n zes maal 15 minuten catechetisch onderijs hadden. Nu zouden we wel graag wat geschikt materiaal willen hebben over de Nederlandse Geloofsbelijdenis of zo. Maar iets, dat geschikt is voor een gezin, heb ik nog niet ontdekt. Zolang dat er nog niet is, moeten we zelf op de een of andere manier ons eigen „leerplan" opstellen.

We slaan de zondagse lessen over, omdat we vinden dat de zondag ook „ontspanning" moet zijn. Men moet de boog niet altijd gespannen houden want dan gaat de veerkracht eruit. Bovendien, en dat is een ander bezwaar dat wij tegen die zondagmorgen klassen hebben, houden we graag de zondag vrij van „haastje-repje." In de werkweek is het al haastig genoeg. Laat ons alstublieft de zondag houden als een dag van ontspannen rust. Een uurtje langer in bed is, volgens mij, helemaal niet in conflict met het idee van zondagsrust. Ook vind ik dat vooral onze jonge mensen wel eens teveel op een dag te verwerken krijgen. Laat ons oppassen voor overdrijving. Wat ik wel graag eens overwogen wilde zien is of het niet mogelijk is om de tweede dienst zo te reorganiseren dat het een multi-bijbel groepen-dienst wordt. Is niet die tweede dienst altijd bedoeld geweest als een „leer" dienst?

In een volgend artikel wil ik wat dieper ingaan op enkele serieuze bezwaren die ik heb tegen de bijbelstudie zoals die in de praktijk zich voordoet.

De Grote Antarctische ontdekker

(Canadian Scene) — Arnes in Manitoba, is een IJslandse gemeenschap aan Lake Winnipeg en hier is in 1879 Vilhjalmur Stefansson geboren.

In een park dat naar hem genoemd is kunt u een beeld van hem zien, gekleed als een Arctische ontdekkingsreiziger. U kunt er tevens in het Engels, Frans en IJslands uittreksels lezen uit zijn boek over zijn drie ontdekkingsreizen naar de Arctische gebieden.

Hij heeft vijf jaar gewerkt aan het in kaart brengen van onze Arctische gebieden. Hij was een expert op dit gebied. Hij heeft bovendien vier expedities geleid naar de Zuidpool. Hij wordt door velen beschouwd als de grootste Zuidpool ontdekkingsreiziger.

Hij was de eerste die gebruik maakte van Manchurian ponies in plaats van honden op de gevaarlijke reis naar de Zuidpool. De ontdekking van de zuidelijke magnetische Pool wordt aan hem toegeschreven. Op zijn tweede reis zonk zijn schip en hij verloor daarbij een groot gedeelte van zijn voorzieningen. Hij maakte de 800 mijl lange reis over de Zuidelijks ijszee in een roeiboot. Ongelooflijke moed en uithoudingsvermogen!

Hij is begraven op South Georgia Island in Antarctica. Een jongeman uit Arnes in Manitoba die een ster was op het toneel van beide polen.

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BIRTH

KEMPER: We, Ted and Liz (nee Bruining), give thanks to God, the creator of life, for entrusting into our care, another healthy son, whom we have named, BRIAN CHRISTOPHER. He was born on June 27, 1981, weighing 8 lbs. A little brother for Benjamin. Proud grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. J. Bruining of Freelton, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Kemper of Waterdown. R.R.#4, Dundas, ON L9H 5E4.

MARRIAGES

BOSMA-ELZINGA: Mr. and Mrs. Case Bosma of Hamilton, ON, are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, TERESA MARLENE to SIMON JEFFREY, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Elzinga of Mount Hope, ON. Their marriage will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, July 25, 1981 at 2:30 p.m. in Mount Hamilton Chr. Ref. Church, Hamilton, ON. Rev. J. Kerssies officiating.
Future address: R.R.#1, Caledonia, ON.

DEKKER-VAN DER KLOK: Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dekker, are happy to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, GWENDOLYN JANE to DONALD, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Van der Klok. The wedding ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Friday, July 24, 1981 at 3:00 p.m. in the Westmount Chr. Ref. Church of Strathroy, ON. Rev. C. Tuyl officiating.
Future address: 50 Oak Park Ave., Toronto, ON

EYGENRAAM-EISEN: Mr. and Mrs. Simon Eygenraam, of Brampton, ON, are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, JACQUELINE ELAINE to JOHN ALBERTUS, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Eisen of Renfrew, ON. The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, in the Second Chr. Ref. Church of Brampton, ON, on Friday, July 24, 1981 at 7:00 p.m. Rev. P. DeBruyne officiating.
Future address: Talitha Chr. Homes, P.O. Box 2112, Cochrane, ON P0L 1C0

RUTGERS-McGUINNESS: Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Rutgers of Mississauga, ON, are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, WILLY to KEVIN, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. McGuinness of Liverpool, England. The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, July 18, 1981 at 3:00 p.m. in the Clarkson Chr. Ref. Church, Mississauga, ON.
Future address: 2360 Bonner Rd., Apt. #1008, Mississauga, ON L5J 2C7

To be sure . . .
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— Thankyou

ANNIVERSARIES

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1941 — 1981

On August 5, 1981, we are happy to celebrate the 40th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

GERRY and GRACE DE GRAAF
(nee Pol)

We are thankful to the Lord for giving us such wonderful parents and grandparents, and pray that he will continue to bless and keep them for each other and for us.
John & Barbara de Graaf; Paul, Carole — Edmonton, AB
Jim & Laurel de Graaf; Julie, Marcus — Regina, SK
Home address: 620 Rex Rd., Kelowna, BC

1956 — July 27 — 1981

With praise to the Lord, we announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

JACK and BARBARA DUIKER
(nee Boeyenga)

We thank the Lord for them, and our prayer is that he will continue to strengthen and guide them, and to cause them to be a blessing to each other and to us, as he has so faithfully done in the past, for many more years to come.
Suzanne — Edmonton, AB
Rick & June; Angie, Becky — Edmonton, AB
Marcel — at home
Peter — at home
Best wishes may be extended at an open house to be held at their home on Saturday, July 18, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. (Little Lake, Barrie).
Home address: Box 1107, Barrie, ON L4M 5E1

Nieuwlande — St. Catharines
1931 — July 4 — 1981

With joy and thanksgiving to our Lord, we celebrated the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

AALDERT JAN and GEERTJE SEINEN
(nee Schottert)

That the Lord may grant them many happy and healthy years together, is the wish of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchild.
Gezina & John Linnett; Joan, Wendy, Norma — Cornwall, ON
Henney & Dick Heemskerk; Ronald, Rick — Binbrook, ON
Sientje & Wilfred Commerford; Kim, Gladys, Kathy (great-grandchild: Jeromy) — Calgary, AB
Gerda Hendrika Guhl — Toronto, ON
Aaldert Jan & Marlene Seinen; Anna-Marie, Joey — Fenwick, ON
Seine & Nancy Seinen; Steven, Kari Anne — St. Catharines, ON
Geertje Seinen — Hamilton, ON
Open house will be held on July 26, 1981 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the recreation hall of their home address. Best wishes only.
Home address: Sunset homes, 2 White St., St. Catharines, ON.

1931 — July 17 — 1981
Metslawier — Chatham

With thanks to God, we hope to celebrate with our relatives,

DONALD and JANE VAN DIJKEN
(nee Sijtsma)

their 50th Wedding Anniversary. It is our sincere prayer that our heavenly Father will continue to strengthen and bless them.
With love from all of us:
Ids & Mary Haaksma — St. Thomas
Sytske & Nick Buys & family — Aylmer
Freida & Cecil Aukema & family — Chatham
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Ali & Ann Haaksma & family — Oakville
Edith & Ken Gelok & family — Sandford
Norm & Dora Haaksma & family — Brampton

ANNIVERSARIES

Artesia, California — Hamilton, Ontario
1956 — July 18 — 1981

Romans 15:5, 6.
With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, we are happy to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

REV. RAYMOND and CHRISTINA SIKKEMA
(nee De Hoog)

We pray that the Lord who has given you these remarkable 25 years together, will give you many more, enabling you to continue to glorify God with one voice.
Love from all your children:
Lambert & Liz Sikkema; Raymond, Jaclyn — Lubbock, TX
Charlene & Dick Wynia; Christina — St. Catharines
David & Anita Sikkema; Christine, David, Joe — Clinton
Ted & Audrey (fiancee) — St. Catharines
Raymond — at home
Renee — at home
Frances — at home
Home address: 241 Stone Church Rd., Hamilton, ON L9B 1B1

Metslawier, FR — Chatham, ON
July 17

With thankfulness to the Lord, we are happy to announce the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our dear uncle and aunt,

DONALD and JANE VAN DIJKEN
(nee Sijtsma)

We pray that the Lord will bless them and keep them in his care.
Bob & Sita Vanderveen — Waterloo, ON
Annette & Wolfgang
George — Calgary
Mary Jane
John
Michael
Home address: 32 Allen St., Chatham, ON

OBITUARIES

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).
On the Lord's day, June 28, 1981, the Lord, in his wisdom, took home suddenly, our much beloved father and grandfather at the age of 73,

ALBERT STEVENS

Beloved husband of the late Grace Stevens (nee Koster), since September 25, 1979.
Dear loved father and grandfather of:
Bill & Jennie Stevens; Albert, Arthur, Annette, Richard — Newmarket
Walter & Anne Dryfhout; Margaret, Marlene, Clara, Cindy — Newmarket
Harry & Clara Dykxhoorn; Paul, Jeffrey, Sandra — Georgetown
Our comfort is to know that he is with the Lord.

TEACHERS

TRENTON: Trenton Chr. School will need a teacher for **grade 1** (approximately 24 pupils), for the 1981/82 school year. Please address your application or inquiries to: Mr. J. Vreugdenhil, Principal, Trenton Chr. School 20 - 4th Ave., Trenton, ON K8V 5N3, (613) 392-3600 or home address: 41 - 5th Ave., Trenton, ON K8V 5N9, (613) 392-2409.

CALGARY: Calgary Christian School is still in need of qualified teachers in **junior high French, senior high math, physics** for the 1981-82 school year. This school is a kindergarten through grade 12 interdenominational complex and there are plans to expand to other areas of Calgary. If you are interested in joining the team at Calgary Chr. School, please contact: Ulrich Haasdyk, Principal, Calgary Chr. School 2839-49 St. S.W., Calgary, AB T3E 3X9 or phone: (403) 242-2896.

TEACHERS

GUELPH: Due to continued growth, John Calvin Christian School in Guelph, ON, invites applications for a potential opening in the **primary grades**. Please contact: J. Vriend, Principal, 290 Water St., Guelph, ON N1G 1B8. Phone: 824-8860 (school) or 836-6507 (home).

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SCHOOL BUS DRIVER: An experienced driver is required by Calvin Christian School of Hamilton, for the 1981/82 school year. Applicants must possess current class "B" licence. Interested applicants please call: Jack Hagen at: 389-4856 or Gerard Slootweg at: 383-0810.

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MONTREAL: The First Chr. Ref. Church of Montreal, PQ, is in urgent need of pulpit supply for the following Sundays: July 19, August 9, 16, 23, September 6, 13, 20, 27. Please contact: Mr. W. Jager, (514) 694-3057.

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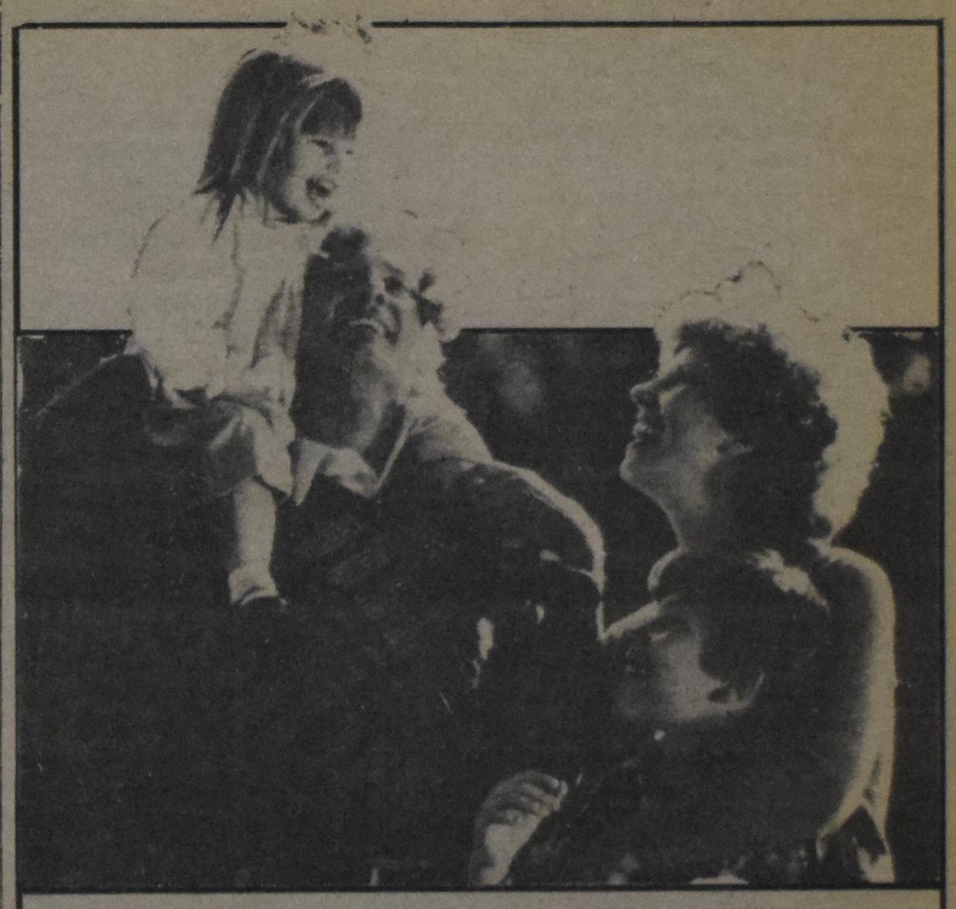

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EVENTS

Christian warrior

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Is your armor gleaming bright?
Or is it tattered, frayed and worn,
With the sadness of thy plight?

Doth thy tired and battered soul
Tend to waver and to sway?
Hast thou found Jehovah's calling
Too hard for thee along the way?

Hast thou let thy golden girdle
Lose its brilliant glow?
Does the truth that set thee free
Tend now to bind thee so?

Hast thy breastplate become rusty?
Hast thy sin marred and maimed
The righteousness that is thine
That thou through Christ once claimed?

Hast thou cast away thy sandals,
With the Gospel of peace to be shod?
Christ did die for His own sheep,
Jesus Christ the Son of God!
Oh, poor Christian Warrior,
Hast thy shield begun to crack?
Do the fiery darts of Satan
Tend to drive thee back?

Hast thou lost thine helmet?
Thine assurance once so true?
Hast thou begun to doubt
That Jesus Christ will see you through?

O, poor Christian Warrior —
Dost thou wield a tarnished sword?
Thou must study to be approved,
For God's Grace to be outpoured.

Fight on! Fight on! Oh Christian Warrior!
And don't forget to pray!
'Tis prayer that sharpens the sword,
And turns darkness into day!

So, oh Christian Warrior,
To thine own armor attend.
Thy panoply will serve thee well
If thou wilt polish and mend.

Judith Norwood,
Amesbury, Mass.

Calvin grad heads PCA

A graduate of Calvin College has been named moderator of the Presbyterian Church in America. Kenneth Ryskamp, 48, is a product of the Grand Rapids Christian school system and has been active at all levels of the Presbyterian Church in America since its 1973 organization.

He was elected moderator, succeeding Paul Settle who served as moderator of last year's general assembly. Mr. Ryskamp is a ruling elder in Immanuel Presbyterian Church of Coral Gables, Florida.

Three Presbyterian bodies may merge in 1982

GREENVILLE, SC (EP) — The retiring moderator of the Presbyterian Church in America general assembly, Paul G. Settle, has welcomed the decisions of two other conservative Presbyterian denominations to move toward joining the PCA.

Voting to take the first constitutional steps toward acceptance of a PCA invitation to join it were the national governing bodies of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church — Evangelical Synod.

"I am delighted that our brethren in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church have responded so positively to the PCA's invitation to effect one church," declared Settle, a Greenville pastor. "Their votes encourage me to believe that our three denominations soon will be one."

The PCA leader, who presided at the opening of his church's general assembly in Fort Lauderdale, June 15, added that the PCA's governing body must now reaffirm the invitation by sending it to its 24 presbyteries (classes) for their approval.

Issued last year, the invitation is without precedent in that it asks the two smaller denominations to join the PCA simply on the basis of its present doctrine and organization. Usually, denominations hammer out detailed plans of union before they vote to merge.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Ontario

July 14-16	Calvinette counselors convention, Hamilton, ON.
Jul. 18	Fryske dei. Begjint de moarns om 11 ure yn Crysler Park, East of Morrisburg. Spultsjes faor jong en ald.
July 31-Aug. 3	23rd annual AACS family conference, "All the King's Players," on the place of art in the Christian life; Niagara Chr. College.
Aug. 20-21	Cadet counselors convention, Niagara Falls, ON.

Alberta and British Columbia

Aug. 1-3	Bulkley Valley Family Conference at Pine Crest Resort. Speaker: Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven on "Covenant Living." Phone: 604-847-3958.
Aug. 27-30	Alberta AACS Conference at Gull Lake; topic: "Communication. Speaker: Dr. H. Van Belle.
Aug. 23-30	Billy Graham Crusade, Calgary, AB.

Miscellaneous

July 31-Aug. 4	Young Calvinist Federation convention at Acadia University, Wolfville, NS. Theme: Search for your gifts.
Sept. 17-19	International Christian Education Association Newfoundland Sunday School convention, St. Johns, NF.

NEXT ISSUE

Dated	Mailed	Deadline for classified ads	Deadline for other advertising
July 10 and 17/combined			
Fri.Jul.24	-----	Fri.Jul.17.10a.m.	Thur.Jul.16-10a.m.
Fri.Jul.31	-----	Fri.Jul.24-10a.m.	Thur.Jul.23-10a.m.

Care to come along?

Racom Bus Tour

A bus tour of Grand Rapids, Holland, and Chicago will be held from September 9 - 12, departing from Hamilton, ON and travelling down Highway 401 where it will pick up additional passengers. $135 double occupancy. Food not included. The tour is fully escorted.

Visit Calvin College, the Christian Reformed Church offices, Pine Rest Christian Hospital in Grand Rapids; Windmill Island, Pillar Church and the Wooden Shoe Factory in Holland. The highlight of the tour is a visit to the Back to God Hour's International Communications Center in Chicago.

For more information contact: Mr. Arend Kersten, RACOM Associates Inc., Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8. Phone: (416) 637-3434

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All the King's Players

23rd annual AACS Family Conference
July 31 - August 3, 1981

What does drama or music or dance or art have to do with the Christian life? Is there such a thing as Christian art, or Christian crafts? You are invited to attend a conference on the theme of an obedient artistic lifestyle.

Speakers: Calvin Seerveld, Bert Polman, Stanley Wiersma, Norman Van Dyke, Kate McConnell, Wendy Bartley, Lambert Zuidervaart, Ken Heffner, Pete Steen, Leonard Sweetman, Bill Van Dyk.

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For further information or registration materials:
AACS,
229 College St.,
Toronto, ON M5T 1R4
Phone: 416-979-2331

Books

Psychology

Emotions and how to handle them

Feeling Good About Your Feelings, by Barry Applewhite; Victor Books, 1980; Scripture Press, Whitby, ON; pb., 117 pp.
The Angry Christian, by Bert Ghezzi; Servant Books, Ann Arbor, MI, 1980; 105 pp.
The Self-Image of a Christian, by Mark Kinzer; Servant Books, 1980; 106 pp. Reviewed by Martha Krueger, St. Catharines, ON

There are many books being written today by Christians about the area of emotional health. *Feeling Good About Your Feelings* is written to help Christians see their emotions more positively and to counteract an overemphasis Applewhite sees in Christian circles on approaching one's faith cognitively to the detriment of one's emotional side.

Applewhite discusses such emotions as anger, sorrow, fear, and anxiety. He challenges the reader's perception of them by stating that the emotions are not sinful in themselves. In fact, each is revealed in God, or Christ at some time in Scripture. Condemnation of one's emotions, therefore, leads one to an incomplete knowledge of God — a God who does not really feel hurt when we displease him, whose acts of love are merely expressions of a rational, willed decision. He does admit though, that emotions have the potential of becoming sinful.

At times, Applewhite bites off a little more than he can chew, let alone what the reader can digest. His explanations for the causes of certain emotions and how to deal with them are sometimes simplistic. Anxiety, for example, is not always caused by sin. He is to be commended, however, for a writing style that is very conducive to learning and change. He uses such techniques as subheadings, visual aids, personal illustrations, questions and exercises leading to response at the end of each chapter.

It is very possible that reading this book could be a big step toward seeing emotions more positively.

Another book in the area of emotions is *The Angry Christian — How to Control and Use your Anger* by Bert Ghezzi. Both Ghezzi and Applewhite distinguish between a negative, unrighteous anger and a positive, righteous one. The former is rooted in selfishness and expresses itself without control. The latter is directed against wrongdoing with control.

Some of their points should be received cautiously and others with wholehearted approval. For example, in suggesting that communication is a necessary part of responding to one's negative anger, Applewhite failed to point out that sometimes it is best to be silent about that anger rather than telling someone we are or have been angry at them. However, I appreciated his warning to let love and forgiveness be our guide.

In my perspective, Ghezzi erred in regarding the release of anger as a lesser evil to repressing it. There are more dangers in the former method since it could leave permanent scars in someone because of thoughtless words we have spoken in anger. His suggestions for channeling anger-energy are commendable though. Some include determination, endurance, and aggressiveness for good. He also recognizes the need for God's help to accompany self-help in changing wrong anger.

Ghezzi provides a more balanced perspective to the area of emotions than Applewhite when he warns that righteous action is a higher priority to feeling right. To reverse a contemporary slogan, "If the right thing does not feel good, do it anyway."

The Self-Image of a Christian, by Mark Kinzer, as well as Ghezzi's book, are part of a "Living as a Christian" series released by Servant Books. Both authors are involved in the same interdenominational, Christian community in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Kinzer discusses the subject of self-image with remarkable balance and biblical truthfulness. He achieves this first by distinguishing humility from a low self-image or timidity. While the former enables us to forget ourselves and serve others, the latter inhibits that. His comparison deals with the often misinterpreted command "to count others better than yourselves" (Phil. 2:3). He explains that this is not a command to see others as superior in value, but rather as those we are responsible to serve. "Better" refers to a social position, a master-servant relationship, where we put another's needs before ours.

However, we are to think in "sober judgment" (Rom. 12:3). about ourselves, which as he explains, involves holding two truths in balance. First, the humbling recognition of who God is and our necessary dependence on him, and secondly, the affirmation that I am of great value to God and that he has given me gifts to use in his service. Kinzer then offers some practical suggestions for overcoming a low self-image.

The Self-Image of a Christian provides a much needed perspective in Christian circles to this topic, clarifying some grave misunderstandings. Rarely have I read a Christian psychology book with the ring of wisdom and integrity that this one has.

Orthodox Christian Reformed Church
Sunday worship service
at Orange Hall,
Maitland St. North,
Listowel.
Minister:
Rev. Cornelis Bronsveld
10 a.m. worship service
2:30 p.m. worship service
★ ★ ★

Psychology/Family

How adolescents fit in

Preparing for Adolescence, by Dr. J. Dobson, Bantam Books, Toronto, ON, 1978; pb., 147 pp.; $2.25. Reviewed by Jenny Oldengarm, Harriston, ON

This book is written by the well-known Dr. Dobson of *Focus on the Family* film series. In layman's terms, he discusses topics which are of great concern to teenagers; for example, feelings of inferiority, alienation, physical changes and related emotions of uncertainty and fear. He examines some popular misconceptions about love and sex, and gives positive direction from a biblical point of view.

The final chapter appears in the form of an interview with four young people who relate their experiences, joys and difficulties of growing up.

Adolescence will be interesting and quite readable for teenagers, and it will help their parents who have themselves experienced (and survived) the uncertainties and questions of the adolescent years. Hopefully, when parents and teenagers in a family read this book, a bridge for meaningful communication will be the result.

Nel Benschop hoopt in Canada te zijn *van 14 september - 19 october, 1981*

Declamatie uit eigen werken — afwisseling met zang en muziek gewenst.

Kerken, groepen van ouderen, organisaties, mannen en vrouwenverenigingen neem contact op met elkaar en organiseer in uw stad en omgeving of centraal per district een avond met Nel Benschop, met muziek en zang.

U kunt meer informatie krijgen, details kunnen later geregeld worden, suggesties voor programma's opgemaakt — daar is nog tijd genoeg voor, maar: Stel nu een avond vast en geef de datum nu aan ons door; wij willen haar reisschema opmaken. Zij zal eerst in het oosten van Canada zijn tot ongeveer 5 october, daarna naar de west. Zij kan per week vier maal optreden, in totaal zouden dat 16 avonden zijn.

Wilt u spoedig reageren, contact opnemen per district of stad en laat het ons weten.

Wij wensen **Nel Benschop** graag voor een avond declamatie in onze omgeving en wensen aan de organisatie mee te werken.

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Te midden van geestelijk verval, relativering van geloven, belijden en beleven; in een tijd waar in Kerk en Bijbel — Gods Woord — begrippen zijn met grote vraagtekens — temidden van al de problemen is het ook de Koning der Kerk, die in Nederland toont op velerlei wijze, dat Hij en geen mensen in ,,Controle" zijn.

Een van deze wijzen waarop God werkt is de dichteres Nel Benschop (ook Ysker-Kooger e.a.).

Door haar eenvoudige, bijbels gelovige, opwekkende gedichten brengt zij veel mensen terug naar dat Woord van God, dat geloof in de Heiland der Wereld, sterkt, troost en helpt velen die de weg soms niet meer zien. God gebruikt haar om opnieuw zekerheden te geven, dat ook het leven vandaag alleen maar rijk en blij gemaakt wordt, perspectief geeft, als het gezag en de waarheid van Gods Woord — de Bijbel — wordt erkend als enig richt-snoer en standaard voor ons leven.

Het is een wonder van de Here, dat de dichtbundels van Nel Benschop reeds jaren staan aan de top van de ,,best-seller" lijst van alle literatuur in Nederland (ook de niet-christelijke literatuur) 1.250.000 gedichtenbundels zijn reeds verkocht. (1¼ miljoen).

Zij is voor televisie en radio en gaat gemiddeld 3 avonden per week declameren, wat eigenlijk alleen maar avonden zijn, waar zij getuigt van haar Heer, Zijn Woord, Zijn Kerk en het leven voor en met Hem, en dat in een tijd waarin anderen Bijbel en Kerk niet meer nodig schijnen te hebben.

Contact opnemen met **P. Speelman,** 351 Albion Road, Rexdale, ON M9W 3P3 Phone: (416) 741-6563